

JPRS 79046

23 September 1981

Near East/North Africa Report

No. 2403

FBIS

FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

NOTE

JPRS publications contain information primarily from foreign newspapers, periodicals and books, but also from news agency transmissions and broadcasts. Materials from foreign-language sources are translated; those from English-language sources are transcribed or reprinted, with the original phrasing and other characteristics retained.

Headlines, editorial reports, and material enclosed in brackets [] are supplied by JPRS. Processing indicators such as [Text] or [Excerpt] in the first line of each item, or following the last line of a brief, indicate how the original information was processed. Where no processing indicator is given, the information was summarized or extracted.

Unfamiliar names rendered phonetically or transliterated are enclosed in parentheses. Words or names preceded by a question mark and enclosed in parentheses were not clear in the original but have been supplied as appropriate in context. Other unattributed parenthetical notes within the body of an item originate with the source. Times within items are as given by source.

The contents of this publication in no way represent the policies, views or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

PROCUREMENT OF PUBLICATIONS

JPRS publications may be ordered from the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia 22161. In ordering, it is recommended that the JPRS number, title, date and author, if applicable, of publication be cited.

Current JPRS publications are announced in Government Reports Announcements issued semi-monthly by the National Technical Information Service, and are listed in the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications issued by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Indexes to this report (by keyword, author, personal names, title and series) are available from Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691.

Correspondence pertaining to matters other than procurement may be addressed to Joint Publications Research Service, 1000 North Glebe Road, Arlington, Virginia 22201.

23 September 1981

NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

No. 2403

CONTENTS

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

- Arab Investment in Commodities Likely
(KHALEEJ TIMES, 10 Aug 81)..... 1

AFGHANISTAN

- Situation of Karmal Regime Reported Deteriorating
(DAWN, 29, 31 Aug 81, THE PAKISTAN TIMES, 30 Aug 81)..... 3
- Mujahedin Victories
Economic Problems
Soviet Dissatisfaction With Afghan Troops
- China Protests Soviet Annexation of Wakhan Province
(Leo Wieland; FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE, 13 Aug 81)..... 5

ALGERIA

- Foreign, Domestic Trade Reviewed; Diversification, Shift to Third
World Noted
(Mohamed B.; REVOLUTION AFRICAINE, various dates)..... 7

EGYPT

- Report on Opposition Parties, Programs, Leaders
(Mahmud 'Abd-al-Wahab; AL-WADI, Jun 81)..... 32
- Mansur Hasan Analyzes Composition, Practice of Opposition
(MAY, 22, 29 Jun 81)..... 41
- Al-Azhar Rector Says Ulemas Support Islamic Call
(MENA, 9 Sep 81)..... 54

IRAN

United States Denounced for Ills of Revolution (KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL, 7 Sep 81).....	55
U.S. Accused of Undermining Formation of Islamic Front (TEHRAN TIMES, 23 Aug 81).....	58
New Government Hiring Regulations Anticipated (KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL, 7 Sep 81).....	60

IRAQ

Comprehensive Health Law Issued (BAGHDAD OBSERVER, 27 Aug 81).....	61
Autonomous Region Service Projects Detailed (BAGHDAD OBSERVER, 27 Aug 81).....	63
Baghdad Water Network To Be Improved (BAGHDAD OBSERVER, 25 Aug 81).....	64
Corn Production, Cultivating Techniques Cited (Clela Khoshaba; BAGHDAD OBSERVER, 22 Aug 81).....	66
Briefs Highway Projects	68

ISRAEL

Stronger U.S. Mideast Policy Urged (Amos Perlmutter; MA'ARIV, 16 Jul 81).....	69
Secular Electorate Urged To Organize To Oppose Clerical Aims (Natan Dorevitz; HA'ARETZ, 12 Jul 81).....	72
Navy Seeks Technological Sophistication (BAMAHANE, 2 Jul 81).....	75
Briefs Fruit Cultivation Experiment	80

KUWAIT

Briefs 'Democratic Group' Protest	81
--------------------------------------	----

LEBANON

Amal Member Comments on Lebanese Situation, Sectarianism (Husayn al-Husayni Interview; AL-NAHAE AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI, 29 Jun-5 Jul 81).....	82
--	----

MAURITANIA

Officials Discuss Domestic Concerns (Bisharah Album; AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI, 9 Aug 81).....	90
--	----

MOROCCO

Opposition Leader Calls for Revised Constitution (Mohamed Majdoubi Interview; AL-SAFIR, 11 Jul 81).....	97
--	----

Figures on Moroccan Residents of France, French Residents of Morocco (AL BAYANE, 11 Aug 81).....	100
--	-----

QATAR

BP, Mobil To Assume Oil Operations (GULF TIMES, 25 Aug 81).....	102
--	-----

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Draft 5-Year Agricultural Plan Ready (KHALEEJ TIMES, 4 Aug 81).....	103
--	-----

Australia, Dubai Discuss Wheat Shipping Discrepancies (Maruf Khwaja; EMIRATES NEWS, 31 Aug 81).....	105
--	-----

Briefs Illegal Aliens Deported	107
-----------------------------------	-----

WESTERN SAHARA

POLISARIO Member Discusses Proposed Plebiscite, Sahara Situation (Nur al-Din Interview; AL-HURRIYAH, 13 Jul 81).....	108
---	-----

ARAB INVESTMENT IN COMMODITIES LIKELY

Dubai KHALEEJ TIMES in English 10 Aug 81 p 2

[Text]

LONDON—Arab oil exporting countries are closely studying the world-wide commodity and metal markets as a possible major new source for investment, according to both Middle East and Western investment analysts.

This would be a major change of direction in Arab investment, which hitherto has been confined largely to the Western money markets, stock markets, companies, or real estate and associated activities.

But commodities are seen as an area with implications for Arab investment. It should meet the constant requirement of ensuring that the real value of Arab investments overseas is preserved, the analysts say.

"If a full-scale switch by the Middle East into commodities is achieved, it would be normal to hear of Kuwait investment in Brazilian coffee, or Saudi involvement in Zambian copper, just as their multi-billion dollar deposits in the money markets of London and New York are taken for granted at present," one analyst told Kuna.

However, there are no signs so far of a hurried or precipitate switch into commodities by the Arab-states.

The appreciation of the U.S. dollar, the main payment currency for Opec oil, to its highest levels of recent years against most world currencies is removing the need for any urgent action, say analysts.

While most Opec states are seeing an overall decline in their oil sales, due to the worldwide glut of crude, much of this fall has been offset by the rise of the dollar, it is pointed out.

In fact, several Opec states, while

actually selling less oil, are probably finding that the overall financial revenue in terms of U.S. dollars is actually keeping steady, due to exchange rate factors, analysts say.

The combined current account surplus of the Opec nations is expected this year to total at least 75-80 billion dollars, a decline on the 110-billion-dollar surplus posted in 1980.

But the bulk of this year's surplus will probably finish up in overseas money markets, and will be seeking investment outlets, analysts say.

As the strength of the dollar wanes, due to the expected moderation of the tight U.S. monetary policy, the attraction of alternative investment prospects will probably increase, they add.

So far, private Arab business is leading the drive into commodity investment rather than the mid-west governments and finance ministries.

A number of major trading houses in the Gulf have stepped up their involvement in commodities in recent months, Western analysts say.

FORM OF AID

For instance, the Al-Futtaim group of Dubai, a big general trading group already involved in automobiles, consumer goods, electronics and construction, is beefing up its commodities interests.

It is prepared to pay up to 60,000 dollars to recruit a manager for its international commodity trading.

The job is to expand a basically non-speculative international trading operation dealing chiefly in metals and "soft" commodities, such as coffee, cocoa, and wheat.

This shows the Gulf trading houses' renewed interest in commodities, analysts say.

But the big boost to Arab commodity involvement will come when Arab governments use their surpluses to gain a foothold, analysts say.

There are other interesting implications for the Arab states' involvement in commodities. For example, a big Arab investment in tin, of which Malaysia is a major producer, could be of great benefit to that South-East Asian country.

In fact, commodity investment could act as a form of Arab aid to the Third World, in which most primary commodity production takes place, as well as providing a return on Arab aid capital, analysts believe.

Arab investment could create a much more stable price basis for certain commodities, like in the case of oil, analysts say.

The member-nations of the International Coffee Producers Organisation have, in the past, declared that they should form an Opec-type body, gaining the benefits of price stability. But a lack of the necessary funds on the part of the generally poor coffee producers, such as Colombia and Kenya, has always come in the way of realising that goal.

An array of technical problems

remains to be solved before the Arab states decide on the manner of investment in commodities, analysts say. For instance, the oil exporters could take physical delivery of commodities and metals, and warehouse them in the Middle East and West, analysts say. But this could lead to great supply and transportation difficulties.

Alternatively, the Arab countries could enter the big commodity trading markets of the West, where trading is done on a futures basis and, generally, the aim is not actually to take delivery of the commodities. But such trading is often highly speculative and does not fit into the Arab investment philosophy.

Another method may be to supply finance directly to the chosen commodity producers—be it wheat, tea, coffee, sugar, or metals such as copper, tin or lead. The cash could be used for improved production and mining, or withholding the commodities or metals in stockpiles at times of depression until the world price improved.

The Arab states could then share in the consequent profits of the commodity sales, by agreement with the producing countries, conclude analysts.

SITUATION OF KARMAL REGIME REPORTED DETERIORATING

Mujahedin Victories

Karachi DAWN in English 29 Aug 81 p 10

[Text] QUETTA, Aug 28: The Russian-backed Afghan army launched a heavy attack with hundreds of tanks and MIG aircrafts and gunship helicopters on the camps of the Mujahideen in the area of Baglan province. The Mujahideen fought back valiantly and repulsed the blitz. The Mujahideen inflicted heavy losses of life and property on the Afghan army who later took to heels.

According to a Press release of Hizbe Islami of Afghanistan (Younis Khalis party) the Mujahideen shot down a gunship helicopter and destroyed eleven tanks.

The commandos of the freedom-fighters claimed to have encircled a large number of paratroopers being dropped in the area of Baglan province and killed them. The commandos were led by Maulvi Mohammad Gul.

The Afghan army started attacking on large scale in the areas of northern provinces but the position of Mujahideen was so strong that Afghan troops faced discomfiture on every front. The chief of Hizbe Islami, Maulvi Mohammad Younis Khalis was himself commanding the Mujahideen in the southern areas of Afghanistan where freedom-fighters had escalated their activities and achieved many strategic successes.

The reports reaching from across the border said that heavy fighting continued in Kandhar, the second largest city of Afghanistan, during the last month.

The Mujahideen of Hizbe Islami of Afghanistan were reportedly inflicting heavy human and material losses to the Russian and Karmal forces.

According to reports, in the first encounter, the Mujahideen destroyed two tanks and one truck by opening fire over Russian military units stationed in the area of Kandhar city on July 18 last.

The Mujahideen also destroyed another two tanks in an attack between the area of Dand and Sarpoza inside the Kandhar city.

4 ARMY OFFICERS EXECUTED

Four military officers were captured alive by the Mujahideen and were executed later on at their positions after trial in an Islamic court. Two machine-guns were seized from their custody on July 23 last, the report adds. The Mujahideen attacked two tanks guarding the oil station of Sarpoza and destroyed them killing 20 crewmen. The Mujahideen also burnt to ashes several Government stores inside the city at the same time.

The Mujahideen killed, another report says, a captain of Afghan army and two other troops behind the Kandhar ice factory on July 29 last.

According to another report, the Mujahideen raided Zarghona High School, a shelter for Communist activists, and killed as many as 18 Government agents there.

The report says that city of Kandhar was still under the sole

control of the Mujahideen at present. The Russian and Karmal forces were besieged by them in every nook and corner of the province.

Heavy fighting has also been reported from Wardak province. In a fierce fighting they killed an Afghan Major and five other Karmal troops. The second-in-command of Fourth Armoured Division of Charkhi was shot dead. Twenty Karmal military troops were captured alive by the Mujahideen. The Mujahideen seized one anti-aircraft heavy machine-gun, alongwith 500 bullets. Kabul-Kandhar road was mostly under the control of Mujahideen.

ECONOMY SHATTERED

According to a report from London diplomatic efforts to solve the Afghanistan crisis gain momentum, the war-torn country's economy seems shattered and the Government admits it is faced with host of serious economic problems.

Speaking at a civic seminar, in Kabul, Prime Minister Sultan Ali Khistmand admitted the serious problem.

Mr Khistmand referred to the measures which according to him, have been taken to activate the workers of the ruling People's Democratic Party against the "counter revolutionaries".

As part of the steps, a Central Defence Councils have been set up under the Party's Politbureau and councils have been set up at provincial and district levels which are also run by the Party.

Economic Problems

Lahore THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 30 Aug 81 p 4

[Text] LONDON, Aug. 29: As the diplomatic efforts to solve the Afghanistan crisis have gained momentum, the war-torn country's economic has shattered and the government admits it is faced with host of serious economic problems, BBC reported last night.

Speaking at civic seminar, in Kabul Prime Minister Sulzan Ali Khistmand admitted the serious problem.

Mr. Khistmand referred to the measures which, according to him have been taken to activate the workers of the ruling People's Democratic Party against the "Mujahideen."

As part of the steps, a Central Defence Council has been set up under the party's Politbureau and councils have been set up at provincial and district level which are also run by the party.

All state powers have been assigned to these councils with a view to improve harmony among the armed forces, national security institutions and the party.

Mr. Khistmand also announced setting up of a special commission of the Defence Council. The commission will mainly deal with the problems of recruitment of young men in the army.

Large-scale desertations from the army are taking place all over the country. Youth are also avoiding to join the army and the armed forces are demoralised.

Mr. Khistmand admitted the problems being faced in army recruitment. He said there was need to improve propaganda about compulsory recruitment and conscription.

The Afghan Prime Minister also raised an important question about the developments and increasing the economic potential of the country.

He specially emphasised the need to improve industry, agriculture, transportation and electricity sectors.

Mr. Khistmand said there was scope for expansion in the industrial sector. He appealed for restarting several closed industrial units.

He said the government's efforts for agricultural reforms would continue. He said the reforms were an effective means in the struggle against the "Mujahideen."

He emphatically said that with these reforms, a large majority of farmers would extend their support to the ruling PDP.—PPL

Soviet Dissatisfaction With Afghan Troops

Karachi DAWN in English 31 Aug 81 p 3

[Text]

Reports from Kabul say that the Chief Soviet Adviser whose rank is equal to a General has expressed his dissatisfaction at the performance of Karmal troops. Radio Pakistan reported last night.

He has complained that the high Afghan Army officers lacked political loyalty and many Afghan officers were aiding the Mujahideen, and were deserting the Army and joining the Mujahideen.

He has further complained that frequent attacks by Mujahideen on highways has been hampering transportation of provision supplies and movement of the Army. The transportation of provision supplies and Army through helicopters is not only difficult but also entails too heavy expenditures, he said.

CSO: 4600/182

CHINA PROTESTS SOVIET ANNEXATION OF WAKHAN PROVINCE

Frankfurt FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German 13 Aug 81 p 3

[Article by Leo Wieland]

[Text] Moscow, 12 Aug--The USSR and China are again engaging openly in border disputes. This time it concerns the "Afghan Strip," which is the salient of Afghan territory in the Pamir Mountains that extends to the border of the People's Republic of China. Beijing had raised official objections to a border treaty between the USSR and Afghanistan that is only a few months old. The Chinese protest was sharply rejected in an explanation by the Foreign Ministry in Moscow, published Wednesday by the party newspaper PRAVDA. At the same time, PRAVDA announced the details of the agreement and historic background from Moscow's viewpoint.

In Kabul on 16 June, Afghan Foreign Minister Dost and Soviet Ambassador Tabayev signed a treaty on the "national border from the western shore of Lake Zorkul up to Povalo-Shveykovskiy Peak." This mountain marks the juncture of the three countries' borders, that is, it is on the border of the USSR, Afghanistan and China. According to Moscow's explanation, the treaty "settles legally the existing and defended line of the Soviet-Afghan border in its sector there" and, thereby, confirms the "principle of inviolability of the border between the USSR and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan." The question this agreement settles concerns the two signatory countries exclusively, "and no one else."

However, China still felt itself concerned in this affair. On 22 July, Beijing's Foreign Ministry sent Moscow a statement terming the border treaty "illegal" and invalid. The reason cited was that: "The disputed area impinged on the Sino-Soviet border in the Pamirs." Moscow's retort called this dispute a Chinese "invention" and accused Beijing of once again pursuing a policy of "heedless interference" in the affairs of other countries.

For some years now, the Chinese government has been trying to represent the issue as if it had some kind of treaty rights to "claims to a part of the Soviet Pamirs. But there are no such rights. On the contrary, the border in this area has evolved historically and was settled by the "exchange of notes of 1894." Even the Chinese maps showed the same delineations as the Soviet maps.

The exchange of notes of 1894 apparently dealt with an armistice agreement between China and Tsarist Russia. Whether it also is to be interpreted as a border settlement, is at least disputed by Beijing. Western sources are providing supplementary

information on this conflict. Then there arose the issue of the "Afghan Strip" which is also called the "Wakhan Corridor," based on the accord between the British colonial power and Russia. It was considered a buffer zone between Russia and India. The historic account then mentions two bilateral Anglo-Russian border agreements concerning Afghanistan's northern border on the "Wakhan Corridor."

The first understanding came into being in 1873 and determined the route of the border from Lake Zorkul (source of the Oxus River) in a southwestern direction along the course of the river. A second agreement in March 1895 covered the remaining part of this border from Lake Zorkul eastward along the mountain ridge up to Peak Povall-Shveykovskiy. Furthermore, a demarcation line was drawn in the summer of 1895. Meanwhile, China did not take part in the enactment of this settlement. British efforts to bring Beijing into the negotiations were unsuccessful. The result is, as the Chinese foreign minister indicates, not recognized even yet.

Several suppositions can be put forth on the question of why Moscow felt it necessary to confirm once again an old settlement in a particular treaty. One of them is that with its explicit recognition of the "inviolability" of its border with Afghanistan, the Soviet Union wanted to disarm the suspicion occasionally voiced in the West that it intends to annex the "Afghan Strip" with its passes to both China and Pakistan. In the event of annexation, the Soviet Union would be a contiguous neighbor of Pakistan in the Hindu Kush. According to reports of Western military experts there are two Soviet garrisons in the "Afghan Strip." Their mission is mainly to block shipments of arms and supplies for the Afghan opposition.

For another thing, the Soviet Union used the Chinese protest once again to demonstrate that it did not have any unsolved border problems with the other communist great power and regards the status quo as unalterable. The treaty between Moscow and Beijing, which sanctioned the formula for the realities created by Tsarist Russia and England, is being defended against the "provocative statement" from Beijing as a bilateral affair--not at all as a matter of "corrections" in the boundary line. The Chinese protest is regarded as having "no meaning or consequences."

CSO: 4620/15

FOREIGN, DOMESTIC TRADE REVIEWED; DIVERSIFICATION, SHIFT TO THIRD WORLD NOTED

Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE in French No 911, 7-13 Aug 81; No 912, 14-20 Aug 81

[7-13 Aug 81 pp 6-13]

[Article by Mohamed B. et al.: "Trade: Changes Under Way"]

[Text] This week REVOLUTION AFRICAINE begins the publication of two studies on the foreign and domestic trade of Algeria.

Concerning the first theme, we are attempting a critical analysis of trade with the West and trade with the countries of the southern half of the world, which Algeria intends to develop in the interests of its own experience as well as that of the countries of the southern hemisphere.

We will reserve the second theme for our next edition, in the form of three articles devoted to the supply of certain food products and household appliances which symbolize the needs of consumers and the availability of these products in the market.

Changes Under Way

Never since independence have we seen such interest in the countries of the Third World and the socialist countries, the traditional, poor relations of our trade. In the last 10 weeks or so more than 20 agreements of various characters have been signed with these countries, which have never accounted for more than 10 percent of our foreign trade. By a paradoxical but solid logic they were considered to be supplementary trading partners who would buy or supply what the developed capitalist countries, which take up more than 85 percent of our trade, declined or were not able to offer us.

The wind which seems to be sweeping through the established order of things apparently has not ceased to blow, since each week we see new contracts entered into with hitherto unknown trading partners.

However, more than the geographic diversity of these countries, which are found on all continents and some of which were entirely outside the scope of our trade, like Bangladesh or Sierra Leone, it is above all the contents of certain agreements which constitute the newest and most remarkable element. For a large part of these agreements the provisions only bear on the strengthening of commercial, cultural, and technical relations, as is the case with Congo, Sierra Leone, the Seychelles, Ivory Coast, or Bangladesh. On the other hand for some of them we have clearly gone outside this conventional framework to sign industrial cooperation agreements, up to now reserved for capitalist countries and multinational companies.

This is the case with the important agreement on heavy industry reached with Angola, which is a marked change from the usual trade in agricultural and handicraft products.

Two other agreements, which have unfortunately attracted little attention, clearly mark the beginning of the departure from the usual framework and bear on trade related to the implementation of the Algerian five-year plan.

The first of these agreements, signed between Algeria and Cuba, concerns exchanges of experience and concrete actions taken between the Algerian Ministry of Planning and National Development, on the one hand, and the Cuban planning organism, JUCEPLAN [Central Planning Board]. In the view of Minister of Planning Brahimi this agreement constitutes one of the "means of bringing together the conditions for self-centered and independent development."

The second of these agreements has been called by the press the first experiment in cooperation between countries of the southern hemisphere. Signed between the National Metals Company [SN METAL] and the Indian company BHPV, it involves the assignment of experts, the training of personnel, the transfer of technology for the production of framework and boiler components for the "Wahran III" and "Annaba II" units, pressure tanks, heat exchangers, and a whole range of industrial products which are much in demand by our national petrochemical, steel, and food industries. This area had been considered to be more or less exclusively reserved for Western countries.

We are undoubtedly witnessing a change in our foreign trade policy. Is this a decisive development? It is still too soon to say this, because, although the agreements signed in abundance with the countries of the Third World are unique and praiseworthy, they are nonetheless still fragile, as the deficit in this area is significant. However, if this is pursued with perseverance--and nothing stands in the way--Algeria would open up a real revolution in its trade relations in the direction of diversification and thus of independence and the total exercise of its sovereignty which the polarization of our trade with the capitalist world threatens. "In fact, the beginning of the redirection of our foreign trade and the emphasis given to certain countries of the Third World and to socialist countries are only the first steps toward applying a new policy of foreign trade, which has become imperative and even fundamental for the launching of the five-year plan, whose success Algeria wants to ensure, after bitter experience with trade with the capitalist world." In turn, the capitalist world has pressured our economy in various ways, which has led to the present stage of external debt and to slowing down the achievement of the development programs.

General reflection has refuted the idea according to which it would be absolutely impossible to respect the provisions of the plan and thus to develop the major sectors of the economy unless we move away from the area of capitalist trade. This view has become generalized over the past few months, giving place to a really new policy, supported by the highest-ranking authorities in our country. This has occurred in spite of the resistance of certain persons nostalgic for the spiritual and material charms of this Western world, with its effete, multinational firms which know so well how to smile when necessary.

What is in the course of development in our foreign trade is only the passage from the theoretical to the practical stage of change, undertaken by Algeria on several occasions. This has occurred since the adoption of the National Charter, which recommended establishment of trade "in accordance with the choices we have made," from which would be excluded "all forms of the larvae of neocolonialism."

This determination, strengthened by the resolution adopted at the summit meeting of nonaligned countries in Havana in 1979, asking the member states to strengthen their collective autonomy in terms of economic relations, should end by giving concrete reality to the monopoly of the state over foreign trade. It was underlined in different speeches of President Chadli Bendjedid over at least the past year. It constitutes one of the major themes of debate over the five-year plan since the Central Committee of the party, at its second session on economic and social development, discussed them at length and decided on the diversification of our foreign trade.

The movement from the theoretical to the practical stage, which had begun early in 1980 with decisions on the reduction of foreign technical assistance, was to be speeded up by the promulgation and initiation of the five-year development plan, whose contents and objectives could not really be accommodated to the nature of the trading relations between Algeria and the outside world as they were. This world is monopolized by the capitalist countries, and the other regions such as the socialist countries and those of the Third World, objective allies of true and independent development, are practically excluded from it.

The trip by President Chadli Bendjedid to Africa and to two socialist countries was to be the real catalyst of an unprecedented opening toward trading partners which could, in large part, substitute for the developed, capitalist countries and which had the precious advantage of looking at trade from the point of view of mutual interest and not, as is the case for most of the Western countries, from the aspect of blackmail and pressure.

Blackmail by the Capitalist Countries

Who is unaware of the fallout of the capitalist crisis and of the activities of the capitalist system in terms of our economy. Who can deny the major responsibility played by capitalist maneuvers in our economic backwardness and the failure to realize most of our planned projects?

The facts are at hand to prove that multinational firms, taking advantage of the place which they occupy in our trade, have developed a complete strategy for blocking our development.

The economic objectives of the multinational firms have always been paralleled by political objectives aimed at weakening a country possessing three features: that of being simultaneously a developing country, having a socialist system, and being a member of OPEC. Thus, our country had everything to attract capitalist aggressiveness, aggressiveness which has not been in short supply throughout our struggle for development which our country is undertaking in order to achieve its emancipation.

Today the negative effects of the integration of our national economy into the capitalist marketing area are numerous. There are deficits in our balance of trade and of payments. There are cost overruns in our development projects, extended delays in their completion, inflation, restrictive practices, too much technical assistance and disturbances to our plans. All of this constitutes the impact of the capitalist crisis, of an outmoded and aging system, on our economy and its development. The position which the capitalist countries occupy in our foreign trade facilitated all these maneuvers and will continue to facilitate them as long as this polarization of our trade toward the West continues.

Algeria imports a great deal. Imports double in volume every 5 years. The Western countries are the principal suppliers and purchasers, accounting for more than 85 percent of our trade, whereas the socialist countries and those of the Third World share less than 15 percent (see table).

External Trade Balance Provided in the Five-Year Plan

In relation to the development of individual family consumption and national production imports are to develop at the rate of: 5 percent for food products and 8 percent for industrial goods. In constant prices imports will develop, during this five-year period, as follows, in millions of Algerian dinar:

Item	1980	1984	Total 1980-84	Percentage
Food products	7,500	9,670	43,750	16%
Industrial consumption goods	2,270	3,365	79,910	5%
Raw materials and semifinished goods	12,260	19,990	13,500[sic]	29%
Equipment goods	13,100	15,550	81,190	30%
Services	9,200	11,560	54,160	20%
Totals	44,330	59,235	273,460	100%

It is to be noted in the foregoing chart that priority has been given to the imports of equipment goods and raw materials, to the detriment of food and industrial goods for individual consumption (household furnishings, furniture, automobiles, etc.). This step has been taken in relationship to the results expected from our domestic production which should provide such products for the people. Imports will consist rather of goods needed for the development of national industry and for the bases for further savings. Another observation is valid for services which, totaling 54,160 million Algerian dinar during the period 1980-84, will have their rate of growth reduced to 5 percent, which reflects the efforts to reduce foreign assistance.

The concentration of trade with the capitalist market has not been a painless process. Caught between monetary manipulation and inflation, two weapons used by the monopolist bourgeoisie to weaken the countries of the Third World and multiply their profits, the purchasing power of Algerian petroleum, the principal source of trade income of our country, has not been able to resist the pressure. Algeria has always paid more for what it has ordered from countries which, in return, took from our country its principal export commodity, petroleum, at prices which were always devalued in real terms. Among other results this situation has led to a rather substantial trading deficit.

In most cases, chosen as partners for the construction of projects approved in the development plans, the multinational firms, in an almost systematic way, have brought with them practices which have led to the slowing down of economic development. No project has been completed for the cost and within the time period provided in the plan. One of the most important aspects of the strategy of weakening our national economy and recuperating petroleum profits on the part of the multinational firms consisted in delaying the completion of projects to give inflation time to gain a tighter grip and thus to apply the sacred principle of overvaluation.

Can one, objectively speaking, continue with this kind of cooperation at the risk of completely compromising our development plan, when we know that the four-year plan (1974-77) suffered a great deal from this form of economic vandalism? In 1977 at the end of the plan, the import price index had increased considerably, going from 100 in 1973 to 212 in 1977, or more than twice as much,¹ forcing the Algerian government to reconsider the budgetary funds approved for the financing of the plan and therefore to increase the scale of international borrowing. One example stands out among others: the Liquified Natural Gas complex at Arzew, whose cost as agreed with the Western construction firm had been agreed to be \$340 million, went up in price between 1974 and 1977 to \$1,220 million, thus coming to more than 4 times the initial cost.²

The very long maturity period for investments, as well as slowness in the implementation, had their repercussions on the rate of completion of programs agreed upon up to 10 years before. It is even estimated that there are projects which are not yet completed, dating from the three-year plan (1967-69). Apart from the delays that have accumulated, these slowdowns have led to two phenomena: the progressive loss of control over the conduct of our development program and the recourse to external indebtedness. An UNCTAD study estimates that Algeria has been required practically to double the size of its investments during the four-year plan and, in spite of that, to bring down its growth estimates from 12 to 8 percent. That is why the fundamental objective is to protect the five-year plan from attack coming from the world capitalist crisis.

Moreover, there is no choice, or the choice no longer exists; the five-year plan is our last chance to avoid pushing our economy into the abyss and to give our political independence a real content.

Let's Not Fool Ourselves!

Let's not fool ourselves! The financial indebtedness of our country, its economic backwardness and its problems are consciously caused by world capitalism. At its head are the multinational firms and financial organisms. We will have occasion to return to this theme, but to support these statements we point out to those who still believe in the philanthropic virtues of capitalism that for more than 10 years Algeria has suffered from certain restrictive practices specially applied to it as a country which has chosen the socialist path. Among other things, these practices require it to pay 30 percent down when a contract is entered into, whereas the rule for other countries only requires 10 percent.³ Backed up against the wall, our country has often had to accept this kind of blackmail and negotiate international loans which have always worsened its financial indebtedness.

Elsewhere, and still a part of this sad chapter of organized capitalist pressure, we note the role of the juridical arsenal of world capitalism which supports the theft by the firms concerned and which has constantly weakened our country on the international market. The cost of international freight has required Algeria always to pay more for its imports and often to give up the export of its industrial products. Tariff duties, developed for the benefit of business circles, in effect are oriented on the extent of processing of the product. The more sophisticated the article, the higher the tariff. Inversely, the less it is processed, as is the case with raw materials, the lower the tariffs. This is one way like the others to steal and to weaken another country.

These are a few indications which justify and explain the determination which has been evident for several months to face up to the situation affecting our foreign trade by bringing it under control and redirecting it. This involves changes in the field of our trading partners.

The idea is not a new one. The reexamination of the situation since the adoption of the National Charter has attracted more and more support in the Algerian economic community, although there is some resistance in certain business circles which are used to the distribution of bribes and which have tried to block the process of diversification of our trading partners. This attempt has been made, despite the fact that the National Charter supports such diversification as the way to turn trade into a rational policy "with strict respect for the choices which have been made by the country," excluding "all masqued forms of neocolonialism" and certain concepts developed "for the profit of capitalist groups."⁴

In view of this political clarification in the National Charter, the situation was further radicalized at the time of the second session of the Central Committee, devoted to providing directions for socioeconomic development. At that time the Central Committee recommended "a trade policy decided on as a function of the needs and imperatives of our development, while respecting the directions set out in the National Charter." It underlined "the need to develop the policy of diversification of our trading partners and to strengthen even further our relations with the countries of the Third World and the socialist countries in the direction of serving mutual interests and safeguarding the economic independence of our country."

THE POLARIZATION OF OUR TRADE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CAPITALIST WORLD

Table showing the breakdown of Algerian foreign trade by geographic area (in percentages);

Source: "L'Algérie en quelques chiffres" [Algeria in Concise Figures], 1980, edited by the Ministry of Planning and National Development

	1977		1978		1979	
	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports
France	24.0	12.7	19.2	11.0	18.7	13.2
Federal Republic of Germany	14.5	14.6	17.6	13.3	18.2	11.7
Italy	9.7	5.5	10.6	7.2	13.0	4.7
Other EEC Countries	9.5	3.4	11.7	5.0	13.4	5.5
Total EEC	57.7	37.2	59.1	36.5	63.3	35.1
Other European Capitalist Countries	10.05	5.0	10.1	4.3	11.4	4.5
USA and Canada	12.4	49.7	9.3	49.6	9.2	49.8
Other Capitalist Countries	0.2	5.0	0.1	3.0	0.2	5.4
Total Capitalist Countries	80.8	96.9	78.6	93.4	84.1	94.8
Socialist Countries	4.9	1.8	4.7	3.2	4.7	2.7
Third World Countries	9.8	2.3	11.9	3.4	6.1	2.5

The above percentages should be considered in addition to trade with Japan which does not appear in the table and which should be added to trade with capitalist countries.

However, it was President Chadli who defended this policy with the greatest precision with many arguments presented on several occasions, the most recent of which was during the seminar held for management executives.

The president's speech was undoubtedly a focalization addressed to the fishers in troubled waters who serve the interests of capitalist groups, despite the constant deterioration in the terms of trade. The president was clear: as of now we have to make a choice. Economic relations must rest on the reduction of imports to the benefit of domestic production and on the control of purchases abroad, as well as on "the preservation of our resources and our dignity in every contact with foreign societies." Regarding the choice of trading partners, the president was as clear and direct, if not more so, emphasizing that it is necessary "to broaden the framework of trade with the Third World," adding that "there is a large number of products which can be imported directly and at reasonable prices, instead of importing them through monopolistic firms which make substantial profits at the expense of the peoples of the Third World."

For the president the path to take is thus clearly set out and essential to follow. Moreover, it is also clear for the five-year development plan which, in the field of foreign trade, is among the most concise and is not encumbered by details.

A reading of the five-year plan is an edifying experience, with regard to the will to get out of the rut into which weakness in the control of our foreign commerce has thrown us. Taking solid note of the provisions of the National Charter on the question, the five-year plan proposes to organize our foreign trade and program imports with greater firmness in order to adapt imported products to the real needs of the economy and to intensify the use of domestic production.

Path of Independence

For this purpose and to achieve this kind of balance, the rate of increase of imports has been fixed at a maximum average of 6 percent per year, compared to an average of 20 percent in the preceding years.

In relative value imports will fall and in 1984 will represent 36 percent of Gross Domestic Product [PIB], as compared to 40 percent in 1979. Cumulatively, imports will be equal to 28 percent of the total resources of the country (Gross Domestic Product plus imports of goods and services) and 36 percent of available resources (total resources plus exports of goods and services). Definite boundaries have been fixed for the volume and value of imports and of all orders placed abroad. In gross terms imports during this five-year period should grow at the rate of consumption of individual households and of domestic production--that is, 5 percent for foodstuffs and 8 percent for industrial goods (see table).

The direction as defined by the five-year plan has two aspects: it is not only a matter of maintaining the objective of controlling and therefore mastering our foreign trade--and imports in particular--but also a matter of providing a remedy for all the anomalies which could eventually arise from improper application of these measures.

It is for this double reason that it is clearly stated that, in order not to repeat the errors of the past, "the independence and the defense of the interests of the country, that is, ensuring supplies and a choice of the conditions of supply, will require the increased diversification of countries supplying our market."

In the present order of things this diversification can only mean the strengthening of economic relations with the countries of the Third World and the socialist countries, on the one hand, and the reduction of the role of capitalist monopolies in our foreign trade, on the other hand.

Of course, this policy requires juridical and political means to apply it. The political means, due to the clear and precise positions taken by the Central Committee and the president, are already available. There remain the juridical instruments and the clear action to be taken for the benefit of the economic independence of the country. On this subject it should be remarked that, in order to bring under control foreign orders placed by economic managers, a change is being made in the Overall Import Level [Autorisation Globale d'Importation--AGI] in order to make this program into "a real instrument for the support of the planning of our foreign trade and the development of the planning of supply procurement." This measure is one of those adopted by the authorities in the framework of control of domestic trade, an essential condition for the control of foreign trade. Strengthening of coordination with the banking system is included among these measures.

This time these measures have not remained dead letters but have begun to be applied in a promising way. The Ministry of Planning and the Secretariat of State for Foreign Commerce are tending to control the AGI levels even further and to program them as a function of the priority needs of the country.

However, it is in the choice of trading partners that the efforts being made seem to be best designed, in the direction of a TRUE diversification of our trade, a diversification accomplished in independence and not in dependence, as some people have advocated, which suggested a simple change of trading partners within the capitalist world.

Battle Has Only Begun

Speaking before the deputies of the National People's Army [APN], the secretary of state for foreign trade clearly stated that, "since 1980 the diversification of trading partners has made some progress." However, he regretted that "regions such as that of the socialist countries of Europe, the South American countries, or Africa only account for 10 percent of our trade, whereas the Western countries still dominate our trade."⁵

Secretary of State for Foreign Trade Oubouzar stated that the government has taken practical measures to deal with this situation:

--Beginning this year multiyear contracts and intergovernmental agreements have been placed in effect which have had the very great advantage of permitting

contact with the socialist countries and companies of the Third World countries which the traditional "announcements of invitations to bid" prohibited and which in fact only provided privileges to capitalist, multinational firms.

--In a parallel effort and in order to establish real competition among capitalist firms, program contracts have been developed. In this way the firms can no longer influence the announcements of invitations to bid, and freedom of choice for the country will be reestablished.

--Efforts for better control of trade policy will not be limited to this level only, since very specific measures have been adopted in the areas of reliance on foreign assistance and external financing.

As a first step the objective is to succeed in controlling recourse to foreign assistance and creating the necessary conditions for the development of the internal initiative of the country. Since last year strict directives have been issued to ensure that decisions on foreign assistance are no longer left to isolated managers in a disorderly way.

--At another level and in order to avoid the restrictive credit conditions of capitalist countries, a certain moderation of recourse to the capital market is required and has been in effect for one year, already giving excellent results, since a decline in the external debt has already been recorded.⁶ In the future an application for a loan will be given privileged consideration, particularly in terms of a search for the most favorable terms and, especially, governmental and preferential credits.

The financial balance for the five-year period, in overall figures, is as follows (figures in billions of dinars):

<u>Category</u>	<u>Value of the objective</u>
Exports of goods and services	409.2
Imports of goods and services	376.7
Balance	32.5

To this balance should be added certain other fiscal categories which would give an idea of the value resulting from the mobilization of the credit of our country.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Value of the objective</u>
Trade balance	32.5
Other receipts	6.3
Other expenditures	8.9
Debt service	81.3
Domestic loan	51.4

Algeria thus has a domestic loan outstanding of 51.4 billion dinars, which is a very large figure with regard to its maturity date and which consequently calls for the adoption of draconian measures. It should also be stated that this

valuation is based on the objective of maintaining the purchasing power of our exports of hydrocarbons in terms of 1980 prices. If this purchasing power cannot be stabilized and on the assumption of its reduction by 3 percent per year, the need to raise credits would amount to more than 80 billion dinars. The prospects are far from promising, and it can thus be understood why the struggle for the strengthening of economic independence promises to be a difficult one.

With the beginnings of an opening to expanded trade relations with the socialist countries and with the Third World, of which we have provided some details at the beginning of this article, the measures under way to exert control over foreign trade will inevitably lead to independence and sovereignty in our foreign trade, giving more assurance to the success of the five-year plan. However, we must realize clearly that the battle has only begun and that only perseverance in action, through the ever more sustained exercise of revolutionary democracy, will lead us to the balance we seek.

In the same way, it would be useless to seek to control foreign trade if domestic trade is not brought under control and is left to speculators of all kinds. For example, because of the actions of large middlemen firms, which have sabotaged any programming of consumption, additional imports have been carried out in order to meet demand, and foreign purchases have increased by 11.5 percent, instead of the 6 percent authorized. This was certainly foreseeable, but while we draw conclusions from the past, it is so much the more an example not to be ignored.

* * *

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN TRADE

(Second Session devoted to directions for economic and social development)

--The Central Committee considers that particular attention must be devoted to the reduction of our degree of dependence on foreign economies.

--To this end the limitation on recourse to foreign resources must constitute a constant concern of all of our economic managers.

--Recourse to foreign help must be brought under control and be employed in a selective way, within strict limits and in rigorously planned proportions.

--A trade policy must be decided on as a function of our development needs and imperatives, while respecting the directions set out in the National Charter.

--By a policy of Algerianization it will be necessary to place it in its proper limits and to banish any form of dependence and alienation.

--The Central Committee emphasizes in particular the need to develop the policy of diversification of our trading partners and to strengthen even further our relations with the countries of the Third World and the socialist countries in our mutual interest and with a view to safeguard the economic independence of the country.

FOOTNOTES

1. Source: OPEC (cited by Abdelkader Sid-Ahmed in the document prepared by UNCTAD in 1978, entitled, "Mobilization of Internal OPEC Resources.")
2. Source: Manhattan Bank, "Mideast Markets," 30 January 1978, p 13.
3. On this subject Abdelkader Sid-Ahmed writes: "It is clear that the fixing of demand accounts at the rate of 30 percent has had highly negative effects on the achievement of Algerian development programs and has involved the abandonment of projects undertaken with France, estimated at nearly \$4 billion in 1975. Those are practices which weigh heavily on OPEC development programs."
4. National Charter: Title 6, Chapter VII: Trade with Foreign Countries; pages 151-155: published by Editions Populaires de l'Armee.

The National Charter clearly states that without control of trade, in conformity with the choices made by the country, there will only be room "for the remnant forms of neocolonialism which seek to continue the exploitation of the resources, the advantages, and the labor of the country. It is particularly appropriate to consider, with the greatest reserve, ideas tending to establish in the developing countries and for the benefit of capitalist groups industrial activity presented as looking for cheap, abundant manpower or not requiring a high technological level.

"Accepting such ideas and making them a basis for development amounts to taking the risk of encountering certain and severe disappointments. Engaging in such activities as working for the account of foreign interest groups and responding to the attraction of cheap labor comes down to forcing this labor group to undergo prolonged stagnation in its living level and to making it live under conditions similar to those of the sub-proletariat within its own country."

5. Oubouzar pointed out in particular that countries like the United States, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Italy in 1980 still dominated the foreign trade of Algeria with the external world, underlining the fact that, "the socialist countries of Europe, the countries of South America, or Africa only account for 10 percent of our trade." (EL MOUDJAHID, 27 May 1981)
6. The objective is to succeed by 1984 in bringing down the external debt to a level equal to about 14 percent of the total value of exports. The cabinet, following its session of 22 December, decided:

--To limit recourse to the international financial market in order to avoid burdening, over the middle and long term, the public finances of Algeria.

--To give priority to the use of governmental credits.

[Text] 1. Electrical Household Appliances: an Improvement [by Y. Sassi]

The return of the prodigal son: after a long absence electrical household appliances have been reappearing for about a year now. At the time independence was achieved, this kind of article was almost considered a luxury. At that time having an electric oven and a frigidaire meant "doing well," while having a washing machine meant keeping up with the latest styles. The family "gas ring" is still to be found, and it does not involve charcoal fires and the inconvenient smoke which does not fit very well into the well-known "3 room apartment." A frigidaire will make it easy to keep leftover food and a more careful kind of planning for fruit and vegetable purchases. We have already seen the abandonment of the "kanoun" [brazier] as a source of heating. That is to say that the improvement in purchasing power and living conditions, by providing more effectively for basic needs, has raised other needs under the family roof. Certain electrical household appliances have acquired the status of necessities. However, as supply has not followed demand, the resulting imbalance did not take long to be seen by some people as a means for rapid though questionable enrichment. We recall that this was the period of first-hand, second-hand, and third-hand electrical household appliances, with each one taking a portion of this succulent cake in passing. Supplying the market adequately became a necessity which particularly attracted the attention of the authorities concerned. One year after the beginning of mass purchases of these appliances it is important to bring out the essential aspects of this matter. During December 1980, the impressive number of 100,000 refrigerators were received. Elsewhere the cumulative plans of the 1980 AGI [Overall Import Level] and of the anti-scarcity program achieved a record level of 80 percent. (This occurred despite the fact that the anti-scarcity program did not start until well into 1980.) The least that one can say is that this was the beginning of an unaccustomed situation and one which was a happy surprise for the public.

Extension of Sales Outlets

There were large crowds collected around the sales outlets, both publicly and privately owned. This was unquestionably a sign of the very inadequate, previous supply level. A simple example: there were only 5,000 washing machines imported in 1975, as against nearly 50,000 imported in 1980. From this figure--a multiplication by 10--we need to draw another conclusion: there is a boom in the volume of appliances ordered and marketed. It is appropriate to recall under this heading that retail sales take place outside the field of activity of SONACAT [national sales company]. Whether the appliances are imported or made locally, handled by SONELEC [Algerian National Company for the Manufacture and Installation of Electrical and Electronic Equipment] or by the private sector, they are thus handled by other distribution circuits: SNNGA [National Construction Materials Company], cooperatives, and private resale agents. That is the list of middlemen involved in the appliance retail trade. It is only recently that the public markets have been added to this group, about 40 of them in the whole country. The objective is to have one sales unit for each district capital, an important group of outlets which have strengthened one of the links in the

distribution chain. Substantial areas are taken up in stocking the appliances, and significant transportation capacity is involved. This will make it possible to fix responsibilities more clearly and to iron out the classical and too often mentioned problems of stocking and delivery. If the inclusion of electrical household appliances among the range of products sold by the public markets has surprised some people, we must note the lack of the same kind of astonishment at the sale in the markets of crockery, clothing, and leather products manufactured by SONIPEC [National Leather and Hides Industries Company].

Although they come under the OFLA (office charged with the sale of fruits and vegetables), these shops handle a broad range of items and contribute to the strengthening of the retail sales structure. This sales operation began in the province of Algiers and vicinity, with the province of El Boulaïda achieving significant savings. Ships are directly unloaded into trucks from the public markets, while all of the port formalities are taken care of by agents of SONACAT, resulting in saving time, intermediate storage, and double transportation costs.

At the level of those in charge of these sales stores the interest is the same because, for them, it is a matter of contacting a larger proportion of the available customers. Providing this kind of merchandise with a more flexible distribution system is seen as an excellent way to fight against any kind of speculative or "just in case" hoarding of appliances. Large number of appliances have been sold in this way.

For example a single public market in Algiers, in the space of a few days, was able to deliver nearly 3,000 frigidaïres, 600 electric stoves, 560 washing machines, 200 color TV sets, and 700 cassette radios. Priced at the same levels as elsewhere, sales take place in the usual way: presentation of an identity card and a SONELGAZ [National Electricity and Gas Company] receipt. A visible sign of the existence of considerable purchasing power, these appliances were sold very quickly. On this subject we must regret the disorderly attitude shown by some consumers and the damage done to store fixtures. In effect, whatever the clothing they wear, a certain amount of civic training remains to be taught the people to avoid having steel grills come back and disfigure the beautiful, but too often fragile glass doors.

In another area the public markets have certain obligations, like other retailers. Among other things they also must take care of after-sales service. On the whole, regarding the choice of the public markets for the sale of appliances, the officials of SONACAT state that this is a kind of "impact operation" which in no way raises the question of maintaining other distribution chains, public or private. The public markets should be regarded solely as an extension in the number of capacity of sales outlets for electrical household appliances.

Private Sales Agents and After-Sales Service: Responding to Needs

For private resales agents, a circular issued by the Ministry of Commerce defines the criteria of agreement. This circular was considered necessary because, since there were so few of them, it was rather difficult to know at first glance if such

and such a store window was that of a household appliance store. To designate the sales points and permit the public to identify them, a request was made by SONACAT that they display the articles on sale or expected to be on sale in the near future. Products and prices have thus been brought to the attention of the consumers. This measure, while it directly attacked the psychosis resulting from the preceding shortage of such appliances, initially had the reverse effect. The stores (sometimes opening at midnight) rapidly expanded in number, and impatience among the public also grew quickly. Since then marketing tensions have been substantially reduced. At present the items on sale, previously the property of SONACAT, have just been sold to private parties, who have been requested--have they always responded to the request?--to withdraw from the display windows certain brands of appliances which will not be included in future delivery quotas, as the supply contracts have been completed.

Private sales agents contacted have reported improved communications with SONACAT. The quotas established by SONACAT concern products which can be sold across the board. We are far from the kind of trade in this regard signified by the sign, "assorted lamps and shovels," carried on the shop window of a store in the center of the city. However, some small problems remain. We were told that among the items in the quotas were fluorescent tubes 1.5 m long still sold without actuators. This is what has made some private sales agents say, and correctly so, that periodic meetings were necessary to bring things up to date and discuss problems encountered.

Although real efforts have been made, there is still a great deal to be done, particularly in terms of self-sufficiency in products made in Algeria. At present, it is by means of equalization surcharges that the prices of SONELEC products are kept up, making them more accessible to the public than at their real cost. In 1981 these prices have also been more carefully considered. For a 4-burner stove, the SONELEC price has been cut by 11 percent, and the price of refrigerators has been cut a minimum of 15 percent.

In this connection, even so it is appropriate to note that certain SONELEC products are far from competitive. This is the case in particular with the Model K 7 radio, which is priced at about 900 dinars, whereas the ITT cassette radio is almost snatched off the shelf (that is almost no exaggeration!) at 570 dinars. Apart from these examples better coordination has been established between SONACAT and SONELEC. The latter also has a role to play as a technical adviser in the framework of the choice of quality of imported products. The proposals made by each manufacturer are studied with a view to examination of a sample of the merchandise before purchase. The problem remaining to be solved is the control of the merchandise upon receipt in order to determine more effectively damages suffered in transit and test the risk of failure to conform to the specifications. In any case the solution of imports cannot be a definitive one, and there is room for stimulating domestic production, particularly with regard to the large amount of foreign exchange consumed in this way.

A further, and considerable means of satisfying the needs of the market is the establishment of an after-sales service capable of meeting the needs of the customers. At present the 25 repair services coming under SONACAT are inadequate,

and private servicing firms continue to operate at exorbitant prices. There also, as is the case with original sales outlets, the increase in the number of small firms, made up of technicians in this area, is a serious advantage for the long life of electrical household appliances. This has not missed the attention of the officials of SONACAT. Thus, the import of tools and measuring apparatus is under way, following the procedure of invitations to bid. In addition to the consequent supplying of repair parts, training courses "on the product" should be organized for the benefit of future technicians and repairmen. The same is true of measures of encouragement to be taken regarding private firms, with a view toward establishing an after-sales service to deal more effectively in the respective areas of quality and price.

Reestablishing after-sales service should necessarily take place and be put in concrete form rapidly, particularly since substantial quantities of appliances have been supplied to the public. Since last year great efforts in this direction have been made, which has alleviated much of the previous tension. This has not prevented, but only alleviated, the existing difference between supply and demand for appliance service, and which must be made up. With only a few exceptions electric household appliances are no longer a luxury but are rather a necessity. An increase in the distribution circuit is not everything. It remains to make a better estimate of demand and to meet it, preferably by more dynamic domestic production, while "reinvigorating" the existing stock of appliances through the spread of after-sales service. Even in view of the difficulties remaining to be ironed out, the experience with electric household appliances has notably improved.

2. Supply of Goods: Toward a New Approach to Problems [by Hichem B.]

Trade and the supply of goods. This is a theme which is returning to our columns and our lips. Up to now how often has this theme brought together officials charged with finding a response to the difficulties encountered? How many programs have been adopted to this end? Reorganization, price control, inclusion in trade registers, anti-shortage program, impact operations--we have been through them. There is a pause, and then the phenomenon of speculation reappears a few days or weeks later, but no longer than that. Nothing seems to contain the evil, as if trade in our country inevitably found its reason for being in the black market and in unofficial distribution circuits. Trade also seems to draw its vitality from the black market, because it is quite evident that the black market day by day pushes beyond its previous boundaries and brings within its scope more and more items beyond clothing and various objects: automobile spare parts, automobiles themselves, hardware, electrical household appliances.

Changes on the Way

However, major changes in the situation are beginning to make themselves felt, and the Muslim fasting month has provided an illustration of this. After a sudden rise during the first days of Ramadan prices returned to normal, and the concern felt by the public was very rapidly dissipated. Before concluding that this was a passing period of calm, it may be worth knowing that in the area of domestic trade a greater concern over the needs of the citizens is beginning to appear. This is

not to say that previously this concern was not taken into account, but the course of relying solely on private initiative has not led to the results hoped for.

However, we should not exaggerate all these positive effects. During the month of Ramadan there was no exception to the rule: a sudden surge of groups of young men invaded the streets to sell goods. That led to cigarettes for 0.25 dinars per cigarette; a box of matches at the same price; chemma for 2 dinars; kalb-el-louz, brik, and a whole variety of other candy set out on improvised stands, in the midst of trash, sewer gas, and dirty walls. A false festival atmosphere surrounded all of these people, who walked around in most cases with gloomy expressions, appearing haggard, washed-out, worried about something.

Available distractions also were too expensive. And going to the beach or elsewhere necessarily implied having an automobile. Having no car, there was nothing else to do but look for trouble in the streets. Tourism has also become much too expensive. The increase in prices, recorded at 14.8 percent in the course of 1980, according to official statistics, could turn out to be incorrect, if one compared the high prices listed in certain shop windows or those asked by street vendors who have become, by the force of circumstances, as regular as legal trade.

Factically speaking, the state approves such activities. Now, "respect for established prices is not a simple question of control," the responsible authorities say. They add, "dishonest merchants may fear price controls when they are effective. Certainly, it is necessary to maintain that fear of the price controller. However, before considering the application of force, we should give the merchant the opportunity to obtain supplies and to assure himself of a profit margin enough for him to live decently. Take the case of a retail grocer. To obtain his supplies he must contact a large number of organizations and see to the transportation of his merchandise. These are activities which are already subject to large, speculative price increases which the merchant passes on immediately to the public, without which he could no longer live."

It is easy to put oneself in this position in one's imagination, and this is what the displays of merchandise of all these small stores in the various quarters of the city would be reduced to if their proprietors were to content themselves only with obtaining supplies at the normal price. "The day when the small merchants are no longer involved in speculation, we will be able to consider demanding strict respect of the established prices and to demand in the same way respect for the rules of the game."

The control of prices has its limits. According to officials responsible for the trade sector, it is quite clear that even now no leeway could be given to this other category of speculators, the avowed agents of fraud. These are the people who devote themselves to speculation on a large scale, the representatives and agents whose evil action in the markets shows that they have means available which are often unsuspected. The approach of Ramadan has undoubtedly brought the authorities to consider a series of measures to protect the consumers.

Controls, and Then?

Included in these measures is a campaign for the repression of fraud. By now hundreds of statements have been made, and the authorities have strengthened their capacity for control by bringing in brigades of police from several provinces.

This type of operation no doubt can provide a certain motive for satisfaction. However, the authorities say, it can hardly deal with the evil at its roots. So what could contain speculation definitively? Strengthening the state stores, the SNNGA, and the public markets, but above all the availability of products on the market. Also, the Ministry of Commerce has begun a great effort aimed at opening, during the next 2 years, a public market in each commune and a branch of the Galeries Algeriennes department store in the capital of each district and province. This action, of course, is in the framework of having the state stores play their role as regulators of prices and as pilot distribution centers, complementing the small business firms in the various quarters of the city which, "they say, nothing can replace." The second point in this program is making the various products available. According to the authorities concerned, that is the essential link in any healthy sales program. That is why supplying the market with sufficient quantities of merchandise is at the heart of their concerns. However, a regular supply of merchandise remains conditioned on two kinds of factors. First of all, there is the matter of stocks of merchandise. In this connection there are no large, covered areas capable of receiving all needed merchandise, nor refrigerated facilities for perishable goods. There also, everything remains to be done. The second factor has as a corollary the domestic production of goods. As domestic production is quite insufficient, this makes it necessary to carry out massive imports of consumption goods. According to the authorities, such imports are required that the port facilities are not even sufficient to unload all the great quantities of merchandise involved. And then there is the matter of transportation. Added to that are the difficulties inherent in the fluctuations of the world market itself. For example, thermos bottles. No less than 2 million units will be put on the market to meet the need. However, no producer in the world is capable of immediately responding to such a demand. It is necessary to call on several foreign producers.

Of course, it is stated, the radical solution would be to increase national production. "Perhaps not only that. It would be necessary to consider no longer consuming anything other than what is produced within the country, with the exception of products essential to national life. Nothing, for example, justifies this massive importation of certain products." A sales policy should necessarily rest on a consumption policy. For that purpose it would be necessary to hold down considerably certain ostentatious tastes for gadgets whose use has ended in creating inequality among the population.

For the immediate future the signs which make one think that there is a noticeable improvement in the sales program show that there is greater determination and more willingness to establish an appropriate organization for the distribution of goods. That is undeniable. However, the role of the state remains and will continue to be for a long time in conflict with the demands of the citizens. When the citizen pays a high price for a product intended to be produced by the

national working force, the citizen considers the state directly responsible for this state of affairs first, before blaming the speculators. There is where the notion of the state takes on precisely all its strength and dimensions within the noble mission which the National Charter gives it. We would hope that the positive, concrete effects, described above, would constitute a step toward a new approach to the problem of selling goods in our society. "We are merchants," say the trade officials. "It is up to the political authorities to make decisions on this question."

3. Public Markets: a Socioeconomic Barometer [by Mimi Maziz]

At first it was a simple idea: represent OFLA at the Algiers International Fair. Since they had an opportunity to sell their basic products, fruits and vegetables, the officials of OFLA were then fully involved. The OFLA pavilion was crowded with consumers, happy to find merchandise there at a reasonable price. The object was to hit two targets with a single stone: keep OFLA there to satisfy the customers and at the same time amortize the cost of the pavilion. It was easily done. The stand was almost permanently crowded, but the customers were beginning to express dissatisfaction at not finding there products that were hard to find or cost too much in a state store. In addition to this first operation a project for large stores was planned, to which were to be attached wagons from the ONAB for meats; from the OAIC [Interoccupational Algerian Grains Office] for vegetables and cereals; from ONALAIT for milk products. The purpose was to give a new dynamism, as desired by everyone, to this first experiment. Now it is 1976. The large store has been built. However, after a time it was necessary to reconsider the sales strategy, innovate, and, in a word, find at the same time new products, new outlets, and a new kind of management, since the public markets had been solicited for the same purpose by local authorities. In the course of this effort the right location appeared for the large store, which was to offer all kinds of merchandise at carefully considered prices. Furthermore, the alliance between the public markets and the consumers is a happy result which, however, requires great managerial skill. Now, at that time the management of four existing markets was as follows: the "Foire Pins Maritimes" was managed by the OFLA; "Cheraga," by the OAIC; "Chateaneuf," by ONAB; and "Boudouaou," managed by ONCV [National Office for Marketing Wine and Wine Products]. They operated with a kind of unbalanced autonomy, because they did not always have the situation under control. Since it is necessary to have more ideas than money to manage things, it was the OFLA, since it had excellent control over the management of the "Pins Maritimes" market, which was given exclusive management of all the public markets.

In these experiments with direct sales to the consumer, when the situation is favorable, you have to realize that the situation can very easily turn bad. When it goes badly, you shouldn't get discouraged. Put your back into it while you wait for things to go better.

Unity in Expansion

"It was barely 18 months ago," OFLA Director Bensegueni told us, "that we tried to think through the problem of establishment of other public markets. We don't hesitate to say that it was the movement of the people from place to place which

showed us that you don't have to have large investments to build a large, simply conceived store. We found this out on the ground, since the consumer public was no more attracted to the Cheraga public market, which cost about 4 billion old dinars, than to the 'Douera' market, which was built for 500 million old dinars." The sound condition of the public markets rests on the search for speed and efficiency at the lowest possible cost, because today the "SEF" [public markets] count on financing themselves. Some 20 months ago there were 8 of these markets. This year OFLA began Ramadan with 57 SEF units, all of them in operation.

This speed in the establishment of large stores is justified for two reasons: the first is based on the pressing and regular demand by the local authorities, who want to strengthen--under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce--socialist distribution centers. The second reason for speed is that the raw materials and construction material are produced locally--hence the virtually low cost of a "public market." At present, we were told, there are APC's [People's Communal Assemblies] which support their request for an SEF by proposing to use their own construction enterprise. Thus, the APC itself constructs the market by advancing its own funds, being reimbursed subsequently.

Responding to Demand

This spirit of sacrifice for the benefit of a common history and a common purpose is the privilege of the consumer. There are two attitudes in life, and experience proves this is so: either you join actively in things or you accept things passively. To maintain unity, you have to go forward.

The large stores are developing, and henceforth their first purpose, which was the exclusive sale of fruits and vegetables, today has largely been left behind. At the request of the consumers the market sells all products and must therefore keep that aspect of things in mind.

One can speak of a sales effort without thinking of stocking merchandise. Now, to start with, stocking merchandise is difficult because of the inadequacy of available storage areas. Thus, when merchandise is received in the ports, it is necessary to take it away quickly, in order to prevent choking port facilities, and deliver it to the company concerned. Now, that is a weak point for trade. We have spoken of management, but we have not thought of stocking merchandise suitable to the established norms. We have been told of the example of ONACO [Algerian National Marketing Office] which presently has something like 250,000 square meters of storage space available, of which a large proportion is rented out. Most often storage areas found by chance are provided, as their name indicates. So that ONACO might be in a comfortable position, it would be necessary for it to have a storage area of 750,000 square meters. Now, the program set out in the five-year plan and programs remaining to be completed from other plans provide for an additional 6,600 square meters of storage space. In fact, this is very little in terms of the needs of this sector. Furthermore, we are told that meeting these needs is not an easy matter. Up to now it has been a matter of constructing small projects which don't require much in the way of resources. Thus, their construction does not interest the large construction enterprises. It once happened, they tell us, that some rather special projects were turned

over to state enterprises like the SN METAL [Algerian national metals company], as well as all projects within a single province. At present practically all of the projects in the five-year plan and programs left over from other plans and remaining to be constructed, or 85 percent of the projects, are under study on a turnkey basis.

In this difficult environment, however, there are actions to be taken to carry out the projects. Among such actions, those taken by OFLA attract attention. In order to respond to the demand, the SEF's ceaselessly restock their products which, moreover, are immediately purchased by consumers. Thus, without really planning it, each SEF is a permanent storage area and is useful for all of the products of the state trading offices and the producing companies.

It even happens that the markets are served by up to three trucks per day.

In the face of this bubbling phenomenon for the sale of merchandise the state price supervisors have made the SEF's into real barometers. Studied very carefully in advance, the prices set for the consumers are affordable for all pocket-books. This tendency to study appropriate prices should not make us think that the SEF's wish to replace the private merchant. Far from that. On the contrary, as the study of the prices is accomplished at the level of the Ministry of Commerce, by responsible experts for the items concerned, and taking the realities into account, this should push the private merchants to follow suit or, at least, to respect the normal profit margins. However, most of the merchants seem to be deaf and blind. This is especially the case with the butchers who, despite the fact that the meat prices at the SEF's range from 36 to 45 dinars, have not lowered their prices by a cent. You would have to believe that there are customers who do not count their change.

Today, when the SEF's serve an area, you can be sure that the people who shop there eat meat every day if they so desire. It is true that, at times, there are substantial crowds around the meat counter. However, when you shop at the market, it is for several days, when you have a frigidaire. However, to eliminate crowding around the meat counter, serious consideration is being given by the Ministry of Commerce, if the human and material resources available permit it, to adopt the system of giving the customer meat which has been previously cut, weighed, labeled (price and weight) and placed in a container. The consumer would only have to serve himself. What causes the waiting to be served is the fact that the butcher does all of that at the request of each client. Indeed, for the price of a kilogram of meat from a private merchant you can buy 2 kilograms of meat at the SEF. At the SEF in Chateauneuf, as much as 1,800 kilograms of meat are sold each day. You can easily multiply this figure by the 57 markets which presently exist throughout the country. That makes people happy, it must be admitted.

A Pilot District

El-Qoleyaa, situated as it is geographically, barely a few kilometers from the center of the capital, is furthermore a nerve center for the farmers of the Mitidja area. It is a pilot district for the OFLA. Seven markets are located there. This fact makes it possible for the self-managed farms of the region to

sell their merchandise easily. It also permits the SEF's to continue in their primary role, which is the sale of fruits and vegetables. On the other hand, the quality of the citrus fruit, the other fruits, and the truck garden vegetables which decorate the shelves of the seven markets in operation, is apparently superior at a first glance. These products are sold at really low prices, since transportation does not count for much. The markets of the El-Qoleyaa area are located in the seven communes belonging to the district. The markets are established at Douera, Mahalma Dwawda, Fouka, El-Qoleyaa, Bou-smail, and Attaba (in the last-named commune the market is in the center of the socialist village).

With its new face the SEF is a jewel for the people. It is a kind of store made to measure for the new kind of consumer, because it was established at his request. Nothing discourages the people, especially when it concerns progress in which they participate.

Everyone Benefits

The proof is there. All the SEF's finance themselves today, once they have amortized their cost of installation. In general, there are no net losses. To maintain for themselves a regular profit margin, certain market managers plan their daily sales by using a rotation of products. Thus, the Fouka market, in the El-Qoleyaa district, has planned its sales to reach an average quota of 40 million old dinars per day. However management is viewed, the profits flow in everywhere. A single obscure point is a problem for the accounting. The chief accountant of the SEF in Douera tells us that this concerns the "blank check" system which some companies--but not all of them--require. Thus, the SEF must pay the company which delivers such and such products to it, using a blank check which is filled in by the aforementioned company. The latter only sends its bill much later on, and often it is the accounting service of the SEF which is required to go and get it and bring its accounts up to date. Often that causes lost time, on one side as well as on the other. The bill is not immediately available. When it is found, it is necessary to file it. That is a system which is a problem for the management of the SEF's. We were told that, "The best way to handle this would be for all companies which supply the SEF's to agree to present their bills at the beginning and to receive payment by check made out in the amount of the merchandise delivered."

At first glance, apart from a few problems which do not affect the consumer, the SEF's are getting along well. Can we say, without exaggeration, that the SEF's contribute to the emancipation of our society? Men, women, and children flock to their doors with the same, shared concern of having a better life. Further, each SEF is a godsend for the region concerned. It holds down unemployment. At Douera there are 195 workers in the SEF, about the average for the rest of them.

Five years after their hesitant creation, the future of the SEF's seems assured, since the OFLA, at the request of the local authorities, is hastening to open a whole chain of these stores. The slogan today is to have a market in each district, for a better life.

4. Retailers: Protecting Small Business [by Mimi Maziz]

Evidently, one can always be "reconverted." That is one way, like others, to avoid restrictions, while trying to protect the substance of the business. You don't have to be afraid to say what we have been remarking for some years now--since the 1970's--that even those who had a business tradition have gradually been reconverted. Timidly, at first, then in a systematic way, the residential quarters have begun to lose their corner grocery store. Like the case of someone suffering from an hallucination, what was a grocery store has become a drugstore, a hardware store, and then, throughout the capital we began to see dry cleaners "flourish" where we used to go every day for our groceries.

Why this change? Is it to follow a "modernist" movement to satisfy a new type of clientele? Were these merchants "afraid" of tomorrow, in view of the difficulty in obtaining supplies, or were their profits too small, in view of the margins they had to operate on?

It was due to all of these things, but the most sensitive point was providing supplies to the retailer.

Today, everything is there. At first, the basic concern for the organisms involved was providing for the needs of the consumer. It was thus a matter of providing for supplies that were adequate in terms of quantity and quality and on a regular basis, avoiding the various kinds of shortages--occasional, systematic, or temporary. The Ministry of Commerce focused special attention on that, first of all evaluating overall national demand for goods, products, and services. This was considered an important element which would make it possible to place appropriate merchandise on the market, provided by domestic production and by imports, against the day when needs would be satisfied from domestic production. Regarding certain, locally made products, it is noted that they are available in sufficient quantity and that imports can thus be avoided. On the other hand, imports are necessary when certain products produced locally are considered inadequate to satisfy the consumers. A shortage of goods becomes systematic when the goods in demand do not exist on the local market.

Regarding the goal to be attained, that is, providing the products to the retailer, it is appropriate to make a comment, a fundamental distinction. On the one hand there are products for which the government spares no effort. These are the products of prime necessity, in large-scale use. There are about 40 products in this category, whose supply is followed up regularly, either directly by domestic production or by imports.

In view of past experience, when shortages occurred, despite imports, the Ministry of Commerce made a study of these interruptions in the stocks and defined the course to be followed to ensure the regular flow of these products.

Following Up on Supplies

To satisfy domestic demand, it is first necessary to follow carefully the process of supply and the distribution system, which require particular systems

for stocking, transportation, and distribution. In effect, if one of these systems fails, supplies to retail merchants will suffer.

Aware of these problems, the Ministry of Commerce and all organisms involved in the process study and prepare to implement an action program aimed at revivifying the whole commercial structure throughout the country. The basic structure is considered to consist of the companies under the supervision of the ministry. These companies will help to diversify the distribution areas in the different regions of the country. A logical division into zones will be taken into account: harbor areas, provinces, districts, and communes.

Once organized in this way the distribution network, which once consisted of a bundle of restrictions in terms of transportation, stocking, and distribution, will be easier to operate and will become more accessible to the small businessmen. The atmosphere, which was difficult to deal with for this category of merchants, will thus be improved by the companies which will assume responsibility for restimulating the distribution system. Light stocking structures, established in each region, wilaya, and commune, will facilitate the flow of the products as well as their availability. Agreements signed in particular with SN METAL and the SNS [National Steel Company] will ultimately permit the construction of these buildings.

An effort will be made in the direction of constructing cold storage facilities (it is enough for us to recall the loss of the well-known harvest of potatoes from Mouaskar; the butter which could not be found due to the lack of adequate storage). In this area the objective is the construction of a "national cold storage chain." We are told that an inventory has already been made to develop this plan, which will result in the construction of cold rooms and freezing centers.

Regarding transportation, agreements have already been signed between the various state monopoly organizations and the CNAN [Algerian National Shipping Company], Air-Algerie, the SNTR [National Road Transportation Company], and the SNCFA [Algerian National Railroad Company].

Three structures are involved in the commercial sales system, properly speaking: the large stores, including the SNGA and the OFLA (which manages the public markets--the SEF); the consumers' cooperatives; and the small retail merchants.

The large stores are considered by the Ministry of Commerce to be the regulators and barometers of commerce. Regarding the consumers' cooperatives, discussion concerning them is going on within organisms of the party. Regarding the retail merchants, the National Charter considers them as part of daily life. Moreover, they are 350,000 in number, spread throughout the country. However, the small retail merchant, although performing indispensable services, has quickly gotten into difficulty as a result of problems encountered in obtaining his stocks of merchandise and due to the massive arrival of new, retail stores in this branch of distribution. However, all along the course of recent years certain merchants have tarnished the reputation of this sector by engaging in reprehensible activities. Nevertheless, we must say that shortages of supply, irregularities

in the market, and the indiscipline shown by consumers have contributed to the creation of a climate favorable to the temptation to make easy profits. We must also recognize that it is very difficult to escape the obstacles created under present circumstances by the law establishing monopolies and the practice of centralization in the distribution of products. For example, for a small grocer to obtain his supplies, he has to contact 10 to 12 state monopolies: ONACO [Algerian National Marketing Office], SOGEDIA [Food Industries Management and Development Company], SNIC [not otherwise identified], SEMPAC [not otherwise identified], etc. To that should be added the fact that the retail merchant must arrange for transportation of a good number of food products. The difficulties in his way are therefore really rather sizable.

Once they have been broadened, the structures for the distribution of goods will then allow retailers to obtain their supplies normally and regularly. After the installation of distribution systems at the level of the province, district, and commune, we will probably then pass to a second phase, that of door-to-door selling. We will see established a system of a traveling representative who will visit each businessman to pick up his quantitative needs, which each distribution unit concerned will then be in a position to distribute by its own transportation system. Parallel to this, in its study of this system of distribution, the Ministry of Commerce is looking at the problem of the profit margin which, according to many businessmen, is still insignificant.

Another program will be undertaken: a more functional preparation of the products for retail distribution. To facilitate the task for the retail merchant, it would be possible to deliver food products to him, not in sacks of 50 and 100 kg but already divided into quantities immediately useful for the consumer: packages of 1, 2, or 5 kg at most.

The fact that retailers have their problems is recognized by all the government offices concerned, which are considering providing this profession with a real charter of work: the "Charter of the Businessman," which will set out his rights and duties. The reality is that it is not the large stores which are in contact with the largest number of consumers, but rather the retail merchants who help to decongest the daily market.

"The Union of the Businessmen," under the aegis of the party, is gradually studying the problems which this sector of commercial activity is encountering, in order to find satisfactory solutions for it.

The role of small-scale business still remains that of distribution, the regulator of daily consumption. Retail merchants should no longer consider state monopolies as a "repressive concept." The authorities are making an effort in favor of this sector of activity, which is properly considered indispensable to the satisfaction of consumer needs. Moreover, the National Charter considers the small business sector to be an ally of the revolution.

EGYPT

REPORT ON OPPOSITION PARTIES, PROGRAMS, LEADERS

Cairo AL-WADI in Arabic No 2, Jun 81 pp 32-35

[Article by Mahmud 'Abd-al-Wahab: "The Opposition in Egypt: Its Parties, Programs, Leaders and Differences with the Government"]

[Text] The configurations of the opposition in Egypt appear to be like the map of Africa, full of sharp ups-and-downs, level plains and high mountain tops.

Just as the ground undulations in Africa were formed over many years, so were the configurations of the opposition in Egypt; they [too] were formed over many years.

Egypt has experienced [political] opposition exactly 102 years ago on 4 November 1879. People were taken by surprise on the morning of that day with leaflets announcing the establishment of a political party that called itself the Secret National party. Ever since that day and until 16 January 1953 Egypt witnessed numerous political parties: from the National party of 1907 which was established by Mustafa Kamil; to the al-Ummah [The Nation] party which was established against Mustafa Kamil by the landed gentry with the assistance of the royal palace; to the al-Wafd party; the Liberal Constitutional party; the Sa'di party; and the al-Ittihad [Unity] party, etc.

All through the period from 4 November 1879, the date the first political opposition party appeared in modern Egypt, to 16 January 1953, the date parties were abolished after the 1952 revolution, Egypt lived through its first and longest period of political opposition.

After the dissolution of parties in 1953 political life began to assume the form of a single party. With the emergence of the Socialist Union as a single political organization, people realized that there would be no return to the multi-party system. However, the seventies brought a contradictory political surprise. The opposition returned, but it did not return at once. It returned after [a period of] preparation that lasted 27 months.

The Preparation Script

In August 1974 President al-Sadat presented what was then known as the

development paper for the Arab Socialist Union [ASU] in which he proposed the notion that it was essential to have numerous factions and opinions and counter opinions so as to move away from the totalitarian practice of democracy to democratic practice. Thus, the multiplicity of factions within a single political organization is a necessity that is based on a social reality which cannot be ignored and which is based on diversity. This happened on 1 August 1974. On 18 August Dr Hafiz Ghanim, first secretary of the Socialist Union said during a meeting with labor leaders at their annual camp in Abu Qir in Alexandria that development of the Socialist Union did not signify a return to partisan life. He said, "We are committed to the formula of the alliance of the working people's forces."

Only 1 month later the People's Assembly convened a committee to hold hearings to discuss the development of the Socialist Union and the possibility of establishing parties within the union.

From September 1974 to September 1975--for 1 whole year--Egypt was totally preoccupied with the ongoing debate over the parties and over the development of the Socialist Union. All the men of Egypt took part in the debate.

At the People's Assembly hearings, for example--and these sessions were usually heated--Muhammad 'Abd-al-Shafi, a member [of the assembly] (now in the Liberal party) asked that the 50 percent ratio for workers and farmers be abolished. He called for the need to establish two parties: the first would represent socialist principles, and the second would represent national capitalism. Dr Yusuf Idris called for the need to dissolve the Socialist Union and to give people the freedom to form political parties and publish newspapers. He said it was necessary for us to define our political philosophy clearly: either we become full socialists or full capitalists. At the same time that Dr Yusuf Idris was expressing [this] opinion, Suhayr al-Qalamawi was asking, "We are calling for freedom, but, when 70 percent of the population is illiterate, we have to ask freedom for whom?" Hafiz Badawi rejected [the notion of] parties. "We have to insist on the formula of the alliance of the working people's forces." What is important is the fact that the fiery debates ended with the hearing committees of the People's Assembly rejecting the formula for the establishment of parties. They insisted on the alliance formula. Workers and farmers rejected parties, and professionals called for the establishment of political organizations within the Socialist Union, that is an opposition on the inside.

The Platforms Step

On 9 October 1975 President al-Sadat made a statement to the press in which he said that he was not against multiple parties at a future stage. "If we go through the period of developing the union and having multiple opinions and factions within it, it will be possible for us to achieve multiplicity of this stage, the stage of multiple parties."

On 21 October Mahmud Abu Wafiyah announced the formation of the first new political platform operating within the framework of the alliance of the working people's forces. He called it the Socialist Democratic Platform.

Abu Wafiyah declared the principal features of his platform's program, and he said that they were manifested in a commitment to socialist gains, support for the public sector and the creation of an administrative revolution. He said that if the establishment of parties were to become necessary at a subsequent stage, the platform will not hesitate to turn into a party.

Only 4 days after the establishment of Abu Wafiyah's platform Mustafa Kamil Murad announced the establishment of a new platform which he called the Liberal Socialists' Platform. On that day Mustafa Kamil Murad said, "Among the most important features of the platform's program are equality between men and women; the establishment of balanced relations with the two super-powers; freedom of action for the private sector; reinforcement for the public sector so that its activity would focus on strategic industries; keeping the state from monopolizing industry, exports and imports; and devising a new tax system and a wise customs policy to serve trade, exports and imports activity so that [new] blood can be pumped into the Egyptian marketplace.

The 27th of October 1975 brought from Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub, secretary of the Central Committee, an invitation to submit applications to establish platforms to the Central Committee. At the same time he announced that the committees of the Arab Socialist Union would begin receiving opinions from the governorates and on the level of the units on the establishment of platforms within the framework of the Arab Socialist Union. The committees would receive ideas about the form of membership in these platforms: would it be open or restricted? If membership is to be restricted, what are the conditions that would have to be available in a platform member?

On the evening of the same day, 27 October, Egyptian radio broadcast the third part of a radio interview that had been recorded with President al-Sadat. Al-Sadat said, "The platforms are not molds. It is possible and natural that the platforms would turn into parties, but they would do so without struggles whose purpose is to get to power."

In 1 month the number of platforms in Egypt reached 43. Among them were applications from an elementary school teacher, a student in the College of Dentistry, a female school teacher in a preparatory school, a trouble-shooting manager at the telephone exchange, a clerk in the power company, an employee in the Chemistry Administration, a student in the College of Education at al-Azhar, an attorney and from a salesman who sells watches and their accessories. Dr Hilmi Murad applied for the National Progressive platform; Khalid Muhi al-Din applied for the Progressive National platform; and Kamal Rif'at applied for the Nasirist Socialist platform.

This deluge was stopped only by al-Sadat's address to the Central Committee on 21 November 1976. In that address al-Sadat asked that the masses be invited to participate in reaching a decision about this deluge. He said that the whole world knew only three basic trends in political action: the right, the center and the left. The president criticized this staggering amount of applications to form platforms, and he referred to two platforms in particular: Kamal Rif'at's Nasirist Socialist platform, which he said

was copied verbatim from the National Charter, and Mahmud Abu Wafiyah's Socialist Democratic platform, which enrolled 293 members of the People's Assembly in 9 days only. Al-Sadat said that this platform had formulated its program in the style of the old parties and that it would have to change it. He said, "As far as the advocates of Nasirism are concerned, we are all completing the odyssey of 'Abd-al-Nasir." The president spoke in general about his advice to the people and to the Central Committee. "We all have to be wary of leaders who infiltrate [our ranks] looking for a role and using the platforms as their front." Three days after al-Sadat's address the Central Committee held a meeting in which it decided to form a committee of 100 members, half of whom would be workers and farmers, to discuss and complete consideration of the subject before a decision is reached.

The Socialist Union collected opinions during the period from 24 November [1975] to January 1976. On 25 January the president's decree for forming a committee to discuss platforms was issued. The committee was to be headed by Engineer Sayyid Mar'i, and it was to consist of 50 persons who were members of the Central Committee and 50 persons who were members of the People's Assembly; half of those would be workers and farmers. They would be joined by 70 persons who are members of the public trade unions and university professors.

The committee held 16 meetings during the period from 2 February to 9 March 1976. These included sessions to look into the applications of those who wished to form platforms. Only 13 of those applicants attended!

On 20 March Mamduh Salim, who was Egypt's prime minister then, announced that he was joining the Centrist platform. This was the first time the Socialist Democratic platform was called centrist.

On 30 March 1976 Engineer Sayyid Mar'i announced the committee's report which stipulated the establishment of three platforms within the Socialist Union: the right, the centrist and the left.

Directly to the Cabinet

On the day following the announcement of the committee's report--the report which had recommended that the name, platform, become organization and that of platform chairman become organization rapporteur--a delegation from the centrist organization led by Mahmud Abu Wafiyah, secretary of the organization went to the prime minister's office pledging their support for him as the organization's rapporteur. The government became a centrist government, and thus an organization got out of the Central Committee directly into the cabinet. While matters were going well in organizing the centrist [platform], disputes began appearing in the other two organizations.

After vicious disputes the matter came to an end with Khalid Muhi al-Din becoming rapporteur for the grouping, and Mustafa Kamil Murad becoming rapporteur for the liberals.

Parties: Why?

The beginning of partisan life was announced, and there actually was a party in power, which had a majority for a full session of the People's Assembly, and there were two parties in the opposition. But in his annual address on 26 July 1978 al-Sadat announced that he would go to the [people in the] street and that he was determined to form a party which he would lead. On 14/8/1978 he actually held the first meeting of the constituent assembly of the National Democratic party [NDP]. The delegates of the Mizr party announced that they were merging with the National party under the leadership of al-Sadat.

Before that, on 4 February 1978 the organization of the al-Wafd party was announced. The party endured for 100 days only; then its activity was suspended on 3 June of the same year to protest the Internal Front Protection Law.

On 12 December the establishment of the Socialist Labor party led by Ibrahim Shukri was announced.

Thus those conditions ultimately gave birth to a ruling party, the National party, which inherited the Mizr party, and to three opposition parties: the Liberals, the Grouping and Labor.

The National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party[NPUG]

This is one of two parties that did not change since the idea for it was simply that of a platform. The party is headed by Khalid Muhi al-Din, one of the members of the Revolutionary Command Council who was responsible for the most serious [activity] in any underground organization: the printing and distribution of leaflets and the recruitment of new officers.

The party has 120,000 members and an annual budget of 84,000 pounds.

The organizational structure of the party consists of a secretariat general of 46 members; a central committee secretariat of 16 members; a central committee of 204 members; and a congress of 600 members.

The party has organizational structures and committees in 20 governorates where it has offices and committees. Over a period of 4 years, from 1976 to 1980 the party was involved in the elections twice. It won four seats in the assembly in its first elections.

The party published a newspaper called AL-AHALI. Khalid Muhi al-Din presided over its board of directors, and Lutfi Wakid was its editor-in-chief. Only 30 issues of AL-AHALI were published; of these 7 consecutive issues were confiscated by the Ministry of the Interior. This [action] was supported later by a court order.

However, the real dispute between the party and the government, for which the price that the party paid was its newspaper and the 1979 elections, goes back to the final days of 1976 and the first days of 1977. These were the days that witnessed the events which came to be known as the events of 18 and 19 January.

AL-AHALI began waging a sharp attack on the government and on its policy. It spoke about "the fat cats" and about how the economic policies allowed for the emergence of millionaires in the Egyptian mainstream. [The newspaper claimed] that the cost of these policies was making the rich richer and the poor poorer. The newspaper dealt with the excesses of the government in the al-Ahram Hill project and in the "Bulaq Hill" [project]. It was referring to the project of selling land in the section of Bulaq, evicting its residents and transferring them to other sections.

The newspaper thus became a headache for the government.

The headache ended with the disappearance of AL-AHALI.

When the People's Assembly was dissolved in March 1979 and [a new assembly] was re-elected early in June 1979, the elections results yielded no seats won for the Grouping party.

The Socialist Liberal Party

This is the second party that has survived since the experience of the platforms. The president of the party is Mustafa Kamil Murad, one of those who took part in the 1923 Revolution. He had assumed numerous administrative positions; [served] as an appointee on the boards of directors of companies and then as chairman of the board, which he still is.

No one knows why the leaders of the party become excited when it is said that they are rightists, despite their clear program and their proclaimed policy. This party baffles one considerably, and there are many things [about it] that one cannot understand.

The president of the party says that one quarter of a million citizens are members of the party. We ask for confirmation of the one quarter million figure, and he confirms it. The secretary general of the party's youth is more realistic than the party president. He says that the party's members are not less than 1 million. Then we ask, "But the president of the party says they are only one quarter of a million!" He says, "No. The correct figure is closer to 1 million citizens. (The incident is recorded on tape, and that does not lie).

In the same manner of this incident we find the party, for example, announcing as soon as it was established its merger with the National party under the leadership of President al-Sadat. Then 5 weeks later it announced that it was staying as an independent party. It is also the only opposition party that launched a sharp attack against the al-Wafd party and the Grouping party after their announcement that they were suspending their activities to protest the Internal Front Protection Laws and the socialist prosecutor.

The party fully supports the government in the course of its foreign policy. In the context of economic policy, it calls for more facilities:

more support for the private sector; a free hand for the private sector in all areas of investment; a shrinking role for the public sector and confining that role to the basic and strategic industries; economic laws and policies that give greater support to these two principles; a customs law; and a new tax law that would make it easier for the private sector to perform its role. In the first elections of the People's Assembly the party won 22 seats. In the 1979 elections it won 2 seats only. The president of the party himself was defeated in the elections in the district of Misr al-Qadimah [Old Cairo]; he lost to the candidate of the Democratic National party.

The party published the newspaper, AL-AHRAR, so it could speak through it for the party. Its first issue came out on 14 November 1977. In its first issues the newspaper dealt with numerous questions and subjects that were congruent with the party's policy.

The Socialist Labor Party

No other party aroused controversy and debate as the Labor party did. Ibrahim Shukri announced the party's program on 14 October 1978--the 45th anniversary of [the establishment of] the Young Egypt Society. On 12 December the founders announced the establishment of the party. President al-Sadat himself participated in the signing [ceremony] along with 20 representatives of the National party. In fact, President al-Sadat strengthened the party with figures and leaders such as Mahmud Abu Wafiyah and Muhib Istinu so as to strengthen the ranks of the opposition.

The party was established while an elected assembly was in session. It was nevertheless able to collect the signatures of 22 members on the application for its establishment. This was more than the quota required by the law, which requires the signature of 20 members on an application for establishing a party. Then the number of party members in the assembly increased to 26. The party is chaired by Engineer Ibrahim Shukri, one of the leaders of the Young Egypt Society Movement in the forties. He was the first member of parliament before the revolution to call for the application of agrarian reform laws. Despite the fact that his father was a superintendent of the royal property, he distributed his land to the peasants in his town of Shirbin. After the June 1979 elections the party won 36 seats in the assembly, but the number of seats it held continued to dwindle due to resignations until it dropped to 16 seats.

The party began practicing its activity after its establishment was announced. It has good relations with the government. The ruling party decided to close the district of Shirbin for Ibrahim Shukri, and nobody declared himself a candidate in that district as a favor to him. However, this response did not last long. On 1 May 1979 the party published the first issue of its newspaper, AL-SHA'B, and the problems began as a result of the newspaper.

The circumstances under which the newspaper appeared and the rumors circulated by people that the party was the government's party caused the newspaper to hasten its disagreement with the government, beginning with its

second issue. It dropped small bombshells in the course of its coverage of the elections, and it began compiling the government's errors. It came out with the headline, "The truth, Mr Prime Minister is that the National party is inheriting the property of a party." Another issue talked about conservatives interfering in the elections. The newspaper's campaign continued, calling upon al-Sadat to interfere personally and to pass judgment on these excesses that took place in the elections. The newspaper concluded that manipulations and pressures took place in the elections.

The party is always being criticized for the fact that the newspaper does not do it justice. Although the party has an actual presence in 20 governorates as well as an organizational structure, its activities and its presence in domestic political action are almost non-existent.

Ever since that date, 12 November 1976, opposition parties have continued to be like Africa's ups-and-downs, arousing controversy and debate and sometimes terror.

Ibrahim Shukri

--Born in 1916.

--Bachelor's degree, College of Agriculture, 1939.

--Appointed member to the board of directors of the Misr Cotton Ginning Company.

--Secretary general of the Socialist Union for the governorate of al-Daqahliyah; after 1964 president of the Union of Agricultural Engineers.

--In 1969 chairman of the board of directors of the Arab Company for Ginning Cotton; 1971 secretary of professionals in the Socialist Union.

--1976 member of the People's Assembly.

--Governor of al-Wadi al-Jadid. Then he left his position and worked as minister of agriculture. He resigned from the ministry to establish the Labor party.

Khalid Muhi al-Din

--Born in 1922.

--Bachelor's degree in military science, 1940 from the Military College.

--Bachelor's degree from the College of Commerce, 1951 Cairo University; member of the Revolutionary Command Council.

--Member of the Council for National Production Development, 1953-1954; he played a prominent role in the cavalry crisis.

--Editor-in-chief of the newspaper AL-MISA'; chairman of the board of directors of AKHBAR AL-YAWM; member of the People's Assembly after 1967 and member of the Central Committee.

--Member of al-Jazirah, al-Ahli and Sporting clubs.

--Lives on al-Jazirah Street in al-Zamalik.

Mustafa Kamil Murad

--Born in 1928.

--Bachelor's degree from the College of Commerce of Cairo University; Master's degree in political and economic science; he took part in the Palestine war.

--From 1952 to 1959 he worked in:

--The Public Affairs Administration of the Armed Forces; the editorial staff upon its establishment; office manager for the minister of education; chief of the National Guard in the section of Misr al-Qadimah.

--After 1959 assistant director of (al-Atimun) Life Insurance Company; a member of the board of directors of the Social Security Company and then of the Plows and Engineering Company; and then an appointed member to the board of directors of the Clothing and Supplies Company.

--In March 1967 he traveled with a National Assembly delegation to the United States. The delegation was led by Anwar al-Sadat.

--From 30 January 1967 he was chairman of the board of directors of the Eastern Company for Exporting Cotton.

--Member of the al-Jazirah and Sporting clubs.

--Lives in the section of al-Zamalik.

8592

CSO: 4504/66

EGYPT

MANSUR HASAN ANALYZES COMPOSITION, PRACTICE OF OPPOSITION

Cairo MAY in Arabic 22, 29 Jun 81

[22 Jun 81 p 5]

[Text] On 14 May President Anwar al-Sadat discussed the question of democratic practice and the opposition in a lengthy public address.

Reactions to the address varied. Some people thought that preparations were being made to abolish opposition parties and to go back to the one party system. Others questioned the importance of discussing the subject of democracy and the opposition under these circumstances at a time when all efforts must be directed to the urgent problems that society is facing, such as food, making goods available, the problem of prices, rent, housing, etc.

If these reactions were indicative of anything, they may point to our need to discuss the subject at this level of importance because although one of the most important benefits of the democratic system is that it guarantees for the people their right to rule themselves, one of its most significant drawbacks is that its success is measured by the participation of the greatest possible number of citizens and their conviction that [that participation] is the strong guarantee that would preserve for them their private and public interests as well as the only foundation for the safety of their social, economic, political and intellectual life.

We would not be exaggerating were we to say that nothing more important than this subject was to be discussed on this public occasion. There are two reasons for this.

First, regardless of the number and significance of the problems and questions that society is facing, the question of the political system is always the primary and the most important question. This is because it is the question that determines the method that society follows in confronting and overcoming its problems and building its future. It is one of the laws of life that every human society must face numerous problems on a continuous basis. Some of these are problems on a national scale, and some are problems of daily life. Whenever a society overcomes the problems it faces,

[such success] means that it has moved into a more advanced stage which harbors new problems that society will have to face and overcome. History has never known a society that was free of problems and questions that required attention. But societies will differ in the extent to which they prepare themselves and their capabilities for confronting and overcoming their problems with the greatest measure of efficiency and confidence.

The Essential Nature of the Political System in Managing Society

One of the most important preparatory factors, as far as managing society is concerned, may be the essential nature of the political system. It is on the effectiveness, the efficiency and the kind of people who are in charge of that system that society's ability to bring together and manage the human, spiritual and material capabilities that are necessary to achieve progress depends. If we were to look at all societies around us, we would find that they were all facing crucial questions. The problems of developing societies are innumerable, but even advanced societies, including the United States itself, which has achieved the power, progress and wealth that no other society has achieved, have their problems too. These are manifested in inflation, unemployment, energy and achieving more scientific progress to ensure their progress and superiority, etc.

The administration of each one of these societies is assigned the responsibility of confronting and overcoming problems. The success of each society depends not only on the natural resources that are available to it, but more importantly on its ability to organize and manage society, on the caliber of people who assume these responsibilities and who are active in the political field and on the standard of their efficiency and their ethics. Those who are active in the political field are the ones who are responsible for explaining the problems, determining their priorities, analyzing them, presenting alternative solutions to them, selecting the most suitable alternative, directing the capabilities for the implementation of these solutions and observing and evaluating the results. It is the political system that organizes the movement of society in that direction; it defines the institutions and organizations through which such movement takes place; it explains the duties, responsibilities and the method of accountability; and it regulates rights and the means for protecting and ensuring them.

Notwithstanding the urgency of the fundamental problems that we are facing in Egypt today--food; housing; utilities; and health, educational and cultural services--and along with the tremendous efforts that are being made to confront these problems, the time has come for us to give the question of the political system and the management of society the aware and profound attention that is due to it. This question has a vital and a direct effect on our capabilities for meeting today's problems and for making sound preparations to carve our path to progress forcefully, confidently and assuredly.

The Establishment of Sound Democracy Was the Justification for the May Revolution

Second, the principal justification and corrective objective of the May 1971 Revolution was the establishment of a sound, democratic life.

After almost entering the modern age of progress in the first half of the last century, at a period of time close to the beginning of the age of progress in Europe and the United States and prior to its beginning in Japan, Egypt was assailed by the major colonialist powers at that time who coveted its strategic location and its anticipated resources. The Egyptian National Action movement was preoccupied for a long time with fighting foreign colonialism and realizing national independence as an essential beginning for any real progress.

The July 1952 Revolution broke out as the ultimate outcome of the National Action movement, embodied in the power and youth of its leaders and men and crystallized in the six principles which it proclaimed: putting an end to colonialism; putting an end to feudalism; putting an end to capitalists' control of the government; establishing social justice; establishing a strong national army; [and] establishing a sound, democratic life.

The people rallied around their revolution from the moment it was announced. The vast majority of the people, with their various classes and capabilities, had dreamed of those principles. The revolution soon succeeded and achieved its major accomplishments inside the country and abroad. It became a command center, radiating [its principles] not only in the Arab world, but also in Africa and all the Third World. Due to the measure of its accomplishments inside the country and its influence abroad it deserved to be marked as one of the major revolutions in history.

The revolution's success relied on the expanding national popular support for it. It also succeeded in putting its principles into practice. But because it was preoccupied with foreign conditions that had begun to lie in wait for it and because it was very careful to ensure its [own safety], it did not give enough attention at the appropriate time to the application of one of its fundamental principles regarding the establishment of sound democratic life under the political regime in a manner that would turn the popular ground swell of support from its position of support to that of real participation in the responsibility for action and constructive effort on various levels.

Power Centers Formed in the Absence of Popular Participation

The fact that the revolution did not pay attention to the achievement of this significant principle at the appropriate time had serious consequences. These began [appearing] in the sixties and continued to get worse under the power centers that were formed in the absence of real participation by the people. It seemed that the revolutionary flame was dying out and that the revolution's accomplishments were vanishing.

The revolution itself needed a revolution to save it from the course into

which it had slipped and to set it on the correct course on which it should have been. The May 1971 Revolution was a revolution against the power centers that were formed in the sixties, arrogating power and the decision-making power to themselves and depriving the people of what is simultaneously their right and their duty: genuine participation [in the political process] by giving their opinions and by taking action.

Hence the establishment of a sound democratic life was the principal justification and the primary objective of the May Revolution. It affirmed the right of the people to exercise their sovereignty inside their homeland and to take part in building their future freely and independently. This objective would open the door to the revolution's major accomplishments of the October War, the liberation of the land, the restoration of Arab rights, the building of peace and the achievement of prosperity. Notwithstanding the splendor of these accomplishments and their effect on the future of the nation, the greatest accomplishment of the revolution and the one that will continue to have the most profound effect was that of establishing and enhancing the democratic system which is the foundation for these accomplishments, the framework which made them possible and [the tool that] makes us capable of accomplishing more.

If one of the chief accomplishments of the July Revolution was the fact that by eliminating the royal regime and colonialism it nationalized government so that it became a national government [acting] in the interests of the people, the May Revolution was a necessary rectification of that revolution when it undertook [the task of] changing the government from a government [acting] in the interests of the people to a government of the people [acting] in the interests of the people.

Thus the shift was made from revolutionary law to constitutional law, to the sovereignty of law and to the state of political institutions.

For all these reasons it was imperative that the question of our democratic political system remain the most significant question. It is the justification for our May Revolution and it is the framework that defines our responsibilities, our duties and our rights; it regulates our actions together for the achievement of the progress and the prosperity to which we aspire.

This question must be one of the foremost subjects of our national debate. It is more worthy of our attention because of the profound effects it has on what is happening in our society at present and what will happen in the future.

Towards an Objective and a Useful Dialogue

To make our dialogue objective and useful, we must recall the evolution of our democratic practice in the past 10 years, since the May Revolution so as to find out truthfully and objectively how far we have traveled on the road and what were the obstacles that we encountered. We must then consider the experiences that a few other countries have had and what rules, laws

and principles have become established as an inseparable part of the democratic concept and its political system.

By comparing what we have achieved so far with what we should have achieved, we can determine the positive and the negative aspects of our experience and the factors that underlie each one of them. We can then strengthen and preserve the positive factors and resist and remedy the negative ones. We would thus correct our course by means of an objective national dialogue in which we would share opinions and counter-opinions with each other so as to enhance and firmly establish our democratic political system and preserve for each citizen his humanity, his dignity and his right to participate [in the political system] by expressing his opinion and working within the framework of national unity which embodies the true values of Egypt: love, tolerance, confidence and respect.

In order for us to be realistic, we must appreciate the fact that building and enhancing democracy along with building peace and achieving prosperity are considered among the major challenges that Egypt is facing. It is a task about which the least that can be said is that it is a difficult and a long-term task.

Citizens of countries which have an advanced democracy, where the practice of democracy is over 100 years old and is firmly established with deep-rooted foundations, continue to hold a dialogue among themselves about improving democratic practices, controlling the details of those practices and ensuring that they not deviate. Only a limited number of the countries of our Third World have dared to embark upon this experiment; and none of them, except India, has achieved any success to speak of.

It is useful to keep these facts in mind so as not to diminish our right to value what we have achieved and embark upon the challenge that is facing us, shunning the vehemence and the convulsions of the impotent and armed with the patience and the humility of the potent.

[29 Jun 81 p 5]

[Text] It was natural for President Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat to become the leader of the Corrective Revolution, the bearer of its banner and the one to herald its principles. Among the men of the July Revolution he was the one with the closest ties to the Egyptian mainstream and the popular wing of the National Action Movement; this was in the thirties while he was taking part in the preparations for the 1952 Revolution. He was in the vanguard of the revolutionary leaders who formulated and realized the victories and the achievements of the revolution. He experienced the revolution and the stages of its evolution from the inside, and he was able with his sense of nationalism and his political insight to diagnose the ailment and realize the extent of the revolution's losses as a result of the delay in establishing a real and a sound democracy.

President al-Sadat articulated his experience more than once when he said, "I began my life believing in dictatorship as a proper way to achieve

national hopes. I was one of the leaders of the revolution who voted for dictatorship when the Revolutionary Command Council met on 27 July 1952 to choose the political system. But having lived through the whole experience I hereby declare that the evils of dictatorship in one hour do not equal the evils of democracy in 100 years."

Dictatorship and democracy as political systems experienced by different human societies throughout their long history are distinguished by how broad the political decision-making circle is and by the decision-making method in the society. In totalitarian and authoritarian dictatorships only the ruler by himself or the ruler with a small group of people around him has the right to make a political decision. [Such a decision] is carried out through the agencies of government. In democracies, however, the decision-making circle expands to include all the people. They take part in determining a decision through a dialogue [process] before such a decision is ratified in the constitutional institutions.

Although democracies are not absolutely free of evils, a fact that political thought is still trying to remedy and overcome, those evils are much less than the dangers that result from having the present and future of an entire society contingent upon the decision of a single ruler. In addition, this has serious effects on the psychological and spiritual makeup of the citizens themselves as a result of the fear and oppression they suffer from in most cases, and this is inconsistent with basic human rights in life.

If the July Revolution succeeded in liberating the national will when it brought colonialism to an end and achieved the national independence for which the people had struggled for over 70 years; if it had succeeded in paving the road toward liberating the will of the Egyptian citizen when it put an end to the royal regime, feudalism and capitalists' control of government, the highest objective of all of this could have been achieved: that the citizen practice his rights and his duties freely under a democratic, political system that coordinates the interaction and integration of the people's political, social, economic and intellectual forces in the fields of progress by means of an orderly constructive dialogue in which the people shoulder the responsibility of endorsing the government and its policies as an expression of their will and their hopes.

Democracies: a Long-Term Process

Lengthy experiences in history have proven that establishing democracies and ensuring their effectiveness is a difficult and a long-term process.

A society that aspires to build a democratic system has to realize that the comprehensive notion of democracy, whose philosophy has evolved in the modern age, is tantamount to a lofty ideal that can only be achieved through real and long suffering. The burden of the suffering is lightened only by the fact that its objective remain clear [in view] and that it is supported by a strong will, an aware determination and an enlightened intellect.

The difficulties of democratic practice stem basically from the idealism of democracy's goals and the factors that distinguish them. Inasmuch as democracy seeks to preserve citizens' rights, its existence and its success depend on the degree to which the citizens themselves participate in it and perform their duties.

Democratic application is based on two principal factors.

First, building democratic institutions. This factor is relatively easier because it can be carried out by legislation guaranteed by the constitution and the law to regulate the establishment of constitutional institutions including a government, a parliament, the courts and democratic political institutions such as parties, trade unions and popular alliances. [This factor] also determines citizens' rights and duties and the measures which guarantee that the government and its policy be an expression of the will and the hopes of citizens.

Second, popular practice which achieves the effectiveness and the integration of these institutions. This is the principal factor; it is the one that has a more profound effect; and it is the one that is more difficult to achieve. This is because it depends on the extent to which the largest possible number of citizens believe in taking part in the responsibility to practice democracy; how much knowledge and experience in its sound methods they have achieved; and the degree of their commitment to democracy. Numerous factors come into play and affect the ability to practice democracy: [a person's] upbringing, education, culture and social and economic conditions.

To evaluate our experience in the practice of democracy during the past 10 years, we have to review what has been accomplished to achieve each one of these two factors.

The Establishment of Constitutional and Political Institutions for a Democracy

President al-Sadat's conviction that we are to make a quick turn to democracy was emphatic because it was the result of a practical experience that had to do with the success of the national action to which he had devoted all of his life. This may explain to us his rapidly successive initiatives in that direction since the early days of his administration. These initiatives were made under conditions that were as far as they can be from conditions that are suitable to [the early stages of] building a democracy.

Were we to recall the climate and the circumstances that were prevalent in our society during that period in the early seventies, we would realize the extent of the real difficulty that a ruler faces in beginning [a journey] on the road to true democracy.

The country was suffering from the effects of a bitter military defeat, a wounded national pride and a tremendous pile-up of economic and social problems. Numerous social forces in the right and the left had been hit;

and they were scattered in the prisons inside the country and in the frustration of life away from the homeland abroad.

By any scientific and logical standards these conditions were considered fertile ground for the growth of dictatorship, even if they were to occur in any of the societies in which democracy had been firmly established. If we were to add to these conditions which prevailed since 1953 and became fixed in the country for 17 years--the age of the July Revolution--without any resistance to speak of from any group or individual, it would seem that we had surrendered to this kind of political system and that we had lost the ability to know any other system.

It was from this unfavorable situation and despite it that President al-Sadat declared his principles and his inclination in favor of democracy and liberating the citizen's will during the first month. In October 1970 [he announced] his decision to abolish telephone tapping, to burn all the tapes and the eavesdropping files and to shut down the detention camps. He abolished sequestrations in December 1970. In May 1971 came his strong blow against the power centers and for the liberation of the political system. The permanent constitution came in the same year; it became the principal official document for the system of government, affirming the principle of the sovereignty of law and a state of constitutional institutions and establishing all the political, economic, social and intellectual rights of people. The constitution affirmed the responsibility of the state in respecting, protecting and maintaining those rights.

Then came the battle of October 1973 whose consequences were not confined to the military victory that was achieved for the first time, but were rather extended to the political and spiritual aspects [of that victory] due to the fact that confidence was restored and the national wound healed. This contributed to the impetus to proceed with faster and broader steps in building democracy.

One of the prominent initiatives on this road was the Socialist Union Development Paper which President Anwar al-Sadat submitted for popular dialogue in August 1974.

One of the most important ideas mentioned in this paper was that of multiple platforms inside the Socialist Union. That idea was based on recognition of the fact that people are free to have opinions and to disagree about them. This was the first time that the principle of difference in political opinion was publicly proposed and acknowledged after the political climate had affirmed for many years the unity of opinion and the unity of rank until it appeared that difference in political opinion was a flaw that had to be avoided. This had the deepest effect on political life in Egypt. The official point of view was the only one on the scene, and only it and those who echoed it were heard. This had a serious effect: it made the citizen schizophrenic, expressing one opinion publicly and at political meetings and keeping his own personal opinion to himself or [sharing it] secretly with those who are close to him.

There was a broad national debate that continued until the National Congress of the Socialist Union was convened in July 1975.

The dialogue that took place around developing the Socialist Union and the idea of the platforms was characterized in most cases by its freedom and candor. We do not say that it was free and candid in all cases because it was natural that some of those who took part in it would be cautious because of what they had learned from previous experience and what they had been accustomed to by the methods of practice. At the same time many opinions emerged, expressing quite freely the point of view of those who held them. Besides those who insisted on a Socialist Union amended by platforms, there were those who called for the establishment of parties as legal political organizations. Although the matter was settled at that time by settling for the establishment of platforms, President al-Sadat himself had carried his thoughts further beyond many of the political forces that had taken part in the dialogue and had intellectually settled for the platforms. In an interview that was conducted by the correspondent of the newspaper, AL-NAHAR, and published in AL-AHRAM in September 1974 he responded to a question about multiple political parties by saying, "We have to look for a formula that would guarantee our national unity with or without parties. Then we have to follow that formula provided that the parties fall under [the rubric of] national unity."

Turning Platforms into Political Parties

In March 1979 President al-Sadat declared in front of the People's Assembly that the trend was to form three platforms: one representing the center--the principal movement in the country; a platform representing the right in general; and another representing the various movements of the left. Thus political multiplicity became a reality in Egypt for the first time since the July Revolution. Candidates ran in the general elections that were held in October 1976 in the name of the platforms which they represented. The centrist platform won a large majority, but there were representatives of the other platforms in the assembly. When the assembly was convened in November 1976 President al-Sadat announced to the new People's Assembly that the platforms and political organizations would be turned into legal political parties. As a result the Misr, the Liberal Socialist and the National Progressive Grouping party were formed. Each party enjoyed full freedom in managing its activities within the bounds of the constitution and the law. Being the majority party the Misr party formed the government, and the other two parties became the political opposition which appeared for the first time in Egypt since 1952.

At that time a movement had begun to organize another party, the al-Wafd party, which began publicizing itself and its leaders until it obtained approval for its establishment from the Parties Committee in February 1978. This was after the enactment of the law that endorsed the right to form parties and regulated the measures of their establishment and their legality.

Thus there came to be four parties on the political scene, and each one

of them had representatives in the People's Assembly. Three new party newspapers appeared, one for each party, with the exception of the al-Wafd party which was making preparations to publish its newspaper too. Partisan activity had actually begun before that since the establishment of the three platforms in March 1976. This activity included the al-Wafd party which began to establish its presence on the political scene; its leaders were conducting the party's activities even before it obtained the decision from the Parties' Committee approving its establishment.

Was the Dissolution of al-Wafd the Beginning of a Crisis?

The four parties continued to practice their activity until June 1978 when the new al-Wafd party disbanded and withdrew from the political arena to protest the Internal Front Protection Law which stipulated that anyone who had contributed to the corruption of political life before July 1952 was not to be allowed to join a political party for 10 years.

The newspapers indicated then that the Progressive Grouping party was thinking of joining the al-Wafd party in solidarity and either disbanding itself or suspending its activity. Why did the al-Wafd and the Grouping parties choose to place this difficult choice in front of the democratic experience despite its youth? This is what we will discuss in detail later when we come back to look into the partisan interaction and the positions of the other parties during that period. But what is important is the fact that to some people the experiment in democratic practice in Egypt appeared to be undergoing its first crisis. Everybody waited to see what will be the position of President Anwar al-Sadat, the leader of the May Revolution who took upon himself the responsibility of building a democratic system. Can the democratic experiment continue after the withdrawal of these parties from the scene? If al-Sadat is one of a few rulers in history who voluntarily gave up powers that were almost absolute so that the people can share those powers through organized constitutional and political institutions, can he be the one to insist on this [power sharing] at a time when some people are abandoning their responsibilities?

In July 1978 President al-Sadat announced that he would personally enter the arena of partisan activity and that he would head a new political party. The decision appeared curious at that time, and President al-Sadat himself stated that he had suffered as he had never suffered before in reaching this decision. What can the presidency of a new party add to a revolutionary leader, a commander of the military victory in October, the maker of the peace initiative and the president of the republic?

There was no justification for this step stronger than President al-Sadat's hope to see the true practice of democracy in his homeland. He was deeply convinced that the people have the right to participate [in the political process]; he was committed to the corrective principles for which the May Revolution had come into being; and he was determined to realize those principles.

The National party came into existence in September 1978 headed by

President al-Sadat. It was thought then that there would be no reason for disbanding the Mizr party and that it would remain in the opposition after a large number of its representatives joined the new party. However, the political office of the Mizr party met and decided to merge fully with the National party. The need for the emergence of another party that would assume the responsibility for the opposition along with the Socialist Liberal party continued to exist. Some time before that Mr Ibrahim Shukri had announced that establishment of the Socialist Labor party would begin. President al-Sadat announced that he supported and welcomed this step. He encouraged representatives to join the Labor party so that it could meet the legal quota to become legal according to the law. During that period President al-Sadat explained more than once in the popular speeches that he made his conviction that democratic practice cannot be complete without a strong opposition. With his understanding of sound partisan action he explained that the existence of members, representatives and leaders in different parties must not mean disunity or hostility. But love for Egypt and the commitment to its values and its morals constitute the principal and the strong tie that would tie everybody together even if each person were to try to serve the country in a different way.

On one of his visits with the people that he used to make at that time to the governorates, President al-Sadat took Mr Ibrahim Shukri on the train with him. He used to insist that Mr Ibrahim Shukri go out with him on the open platform of the train whenever the president would go out there to greet the poor masses that used to gather to greet him. When President al-Sadat was to visit the governorate of al-Daqahliyah, he insisted on visiting Mr Ibrahim Shukri in his district of Shirbin.

President al-Sadat used to do all this to affirm the concepts that he was advocating and to demonstrate the implications of the proper relations and methods of partisan action. At the same time and on the basis of [demonstrating and] explaining these meanings he wanted to encourage any assembly members who wished to do so to join the new Labor party without feeling any embarrassment or discomfort.

After some time had gone by and the Labor party was still unable to collect the adequate number of representatives, President al-Sadat took advantage of the fact that the parliamentary body of the National party was in session in November 1978, and he spoke at length about Mr Ibrahim Shukri and of the fact that he knows him to be a man of good conduct with an honorable political past before and after the July 1952 Revolution. He spoke about the importance of establishing a sound and strong opposition in Egypt so that the cornerstones of sound democratic practice would be completed. He urged all the members of the National party to join him in signing the document for establishing the party. Although this had no legal effect on the party as far as meeting the required legal quota is concerned, it did in fact have a major political and moral effect that made it easier for the Labor party after that to get the necessary number of representatives and to make an official announcement of its establishment in December 1978.

Partisan practice was thus destined to continue. Although the new al-Wafd

party had withdrawn from the scene, two new parties were established: the National party with which the Mizr party had merged and the Socialist Labor party.

The following facts will become clear to anyone who considers all this development objectively and candidly.

1. It was the May Revolution and its national leaders that took the initiative to build a sound democracy despite the difficult political, economic and social conditions that could have been a strong justification for something other than that [which those leaders initiated].

2. The May Revolution made preparations for the process of building democracy by taking several measures the most important of which was the 1971 Constitution which included all the rights and guarantees that would ensure the real practice of democracy when the building [process] begins. The May Revolution itself was the first to respect the constitution and to preserve it. It was intent on not having its effectiveness suspended despite the difficult circumstances that it faced. This was quite the opposite from the way constitutions were handled in the past, ever since they came into existence in Egypt.

3. It was the May Revolution that took the initiative to discuss the right to disagree publicly with political opinion and the establishment of popular political organizations around different opinions.

4. When popular political organizations were established and their leaders and members settled for the fact that these organizations be platforms and then organizations under the umbrella of the Socialist Union, it was President al-Sadat who took the step to recognize them as legal political parties. That was a principal step in building democratic institutions.

5. Parties were established so that political trends can be expressed with absolute freedom. The Grouping party, for example, represented leftist trends including Marxism. This was a first in the history of Egyptian political action. When the new al-Wafd party was established, a number of political figures that headed the al-Wafd party before the July 1952 Revolution were among its chief leaders. These people had been subjected to court trials, arrests, sequestrations and political isolation throughout the period after the revolution. But the May Revolution came; it shut down the detention camps; it ended their sequestration and restored to them their funds, their property and their full rights as citizens. They were even allowed to resume political activity again at the head of a political party.

6. When the new al-Wafd party decided to disband and to withdraw from the political arena and it seemed that the Grouping party was thinking along the same lines that would accordingly bring about the collapse of the partisan political institutions which are an important cornerstone of democratic practice, the May Revolution did not waver or stop in the direction it was taking toward democracy. President al-Sadat himself appeared on the

scene of partisan action adding [one more burden] to his burdens. The May Revolution also welcomed the establishment of the Labor party and tried to amend the Party Law to repeal the condition requiring that a party have 20 members in the People's Assembly so as to provide an opportunity for the establishment of other parties.

Thus the national leadership of the May Revolution was consistent with its corrective rationale. It was faithful to its principal objective of establishing democratic life. It was truthful and honest with itself and with others--despite all the suffering--in using parties and opposition parties to build democratic institutions so that the cornerstones of true and serious practice would become available.

--How was the practice?

--What should be the role of parties in the practice of democracy, and what was the view that our parties had of their role?

--How does proper interaction between parties take place, and how did the interaction between our parties take place?

--Is the practice of opposition an absolute right or is it a function to serve national goals?

--Is opposition outside the political system or is it a basic part of that system with rights and duties?

--What are the disadvantages of the broad majority parties and the small minority parties in practice?

--How can we together--the majority and the minority--upgrade the level of our practice so that we can confront the major challenge and establish a sound practice of democracy in which we can reconcile the right to disagree with the obligation to love and to [show] respect?

8592

CSO: 4504/70

AL-AZHAR RECTOR SAYS ULEMAS SUPPORT ISLAMIC CALL

NC091340 Cairo MENA in English 1050 GMT 9 Sep 81

[Text] Cairo, 9 Sep (MENA)--Rector of Al-Azhar University, Dr Muhammad at-Tayyib an-Najjar, today underlined that the majority of Moslem ulemas were abiding by the injunctions of the genuine Islamic call, through serene persuasion and enlightened preaching.

Egypt, the country of Al-Azhar, was following the teachings of Islam which called for compassion and toleration among all man-kind, Dr an-Najjar told the MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY. He stressed that Al-Azhar University, with all its colleges, professors and students, were prepared to contribute to the sincere preaching of the Islamic call and fill up vacancies in preachers of privately owned mosques.

Another official of Al-Azhar, Dr 'Abd al-Mu'ti Bayyjmī, called on Moslems and Christians to live in harmony and fraternity for the good and progress of Egypt.

He emphasized that Moslems and Christians have been living for centuries now side by side and cooperating on a basis of mutual respect of each other's faith.

CSO: 4500/45

UNITED STATES DENOUNCED FORILLS OF REVOLUTION

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 7 Sep 81 p 2

[Text]

TEHRAN, Sept. 6 (Pars) — The enemies of the Islamic Revolution of Iran are many and varied. Ever since the culmination of the Islamic Revolution in Iran the west has lost an 18 billion dollar market, a situation which has inflicted irreparable material damage to the west. Ever since the morning after the toppling of the treacherous defunct shah and immediately after the flight of American Generals from Iran, the wounded enemies of the Islamic Revolution of Iran have ceaselessly plotted against it. The criminal United States, which has suffered more serious wounds in the wake of the fall of another of his stooge governments in the Persian Gulf, has had the largest hand in the plots against Iran during the past three years.

Hardly two weeks after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, a group of feudal landlords in the west of the country along with another group of the wanted members of the former SAVAK attacked a garrison in the city of Mahabad in an effort to loot arms and weapons. A similar attack was made on another garrison in the city of Sanandaj on March 18, 1979. Later in April of the same year American-inspired Marxist groups created tumult, violence and sedition in a predominantly Kurdish populated region in the north west of Iran under the pretext of racial recognition. They set ablaze crops of those who took exception to the seditionists and attacked their houses.

The pseudo-political groups which sprawled here and there at the instigation of the United States had hardly finished their conspiracies in Kurdistan and Gonbad-e Kavus when in June 1979 the dependents of the defunct Shah's regime, aided by fugitive members of the former SAVAK and led by a leading member of the disbanded Rastakhiz Party embarked on randomly planting bombs in Khuzestan Province. Later the criminal United States tried noval contrivances by concocting new pseudo-political or militia groups whose task it was to create chaos and assassinate personalities. A brilliant theoretician of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Ayatollah Motahhari, was assassinated by the U.S. inspired group of Forqan in May 1979. Later, and in the wake of the seizure of the former U.S. embassy here, documents attesting to the connection between those masterminding the group and the American spies in Iran were published.

The brave Muslim militants, realising the United States had been behind all these plots, finally seized their espionage den on November 4th, 1979. Subsequent searches made in the den of espionage revealed many a clandestine connection of the American spies with their internal counterparts.

The seizure of the den of the American spies and the publication of exposes in connection with the activities of the former American officials here was regarded to have been the fiercest blow in modern times on the western superpower. Later the news of the espionage activities of the American officials in the various government organizations of the host countries carried out under the cover of diplomatic functions here and there throughout the world were published ending in the dismissal of a number of so-called American diplomats in Mozambique and a few other countries. This, too, served to enlighten further, world public opinion about the Washington inspired crimes in various parts of the world.

In the wake of the hostage taking in Iran, the United States decided on economic sanctions against Iran, whereby it banned the export of any item to this country. But the sanctions, which also included orders already paid for was not in reality a new decision, since in practice and ever since the toppling of the defunct shah the United States had embarked on practical economic sanctions against Iran. Gradually other western governments prodded or intimidated by the United States participated in the sanctions against Iran, and thereby the plot evolved into all-out sanctions of the western governments against Iran.

In January 1980 the United States, launched more of its dependents on the scene for the purpose of creating fresh sedition. This time the leaders of the Muslim People's Party — a party whose connection with the United States had previously been discovered from documents found at the den of the American spies, created tumult in the city of Tabriz. Aided by the Mujahideen Khalq Organization and supporters of Qasemlu, they occupied Tabriz Radio Station for a few hours but were eventually expelled from the compound, as well as from the political scene by the defenders of the Islamic Revolution.

The United States, which gained absolutely no immediate results from its economic sanctions against Iran, and in order to save its face in the scene of political and military power, embarked on blatant military aggression against Iran in collaboration with such people as Banisadr. The so-called rescue crew which the United States landed in Tabas (Iran) on April 25, 1980 resulted in a disgraceful failure. The act was recognized as having been a blatant transgression against the territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran. To put a lid on this aborted attempt and in order to deviate world attention, U.S. agents arrived in London via Iraq and occupied the Iranian embassy there on April 30th, 1980. After having control of the embassy for five days, they killed two Iranian defenders of the Revolution and eventually surrendered to Scotland Yard.

The United States, which failed to attain any of its goals by paying its flunkies in Kurdistan, and Gonbad, or by creating riots in Tabriz and Khuzestan or by assassinations, or military aggression, this time thought of a new plot. The atmosphere of free thought and activity which the revolution had brought to this country provided the best opportunity for the growth and development of the various political schools in Iran. The criminal United States exploited the situation here in order to botch up quasi political groups by hiring a group of flunkies.

The idea was to create another Lebanon in the Middle East. The pseudo-political groups which were active mainly in Kurdistan and Gonbad boasted of the arms which they had looted from garrisons. Their main base was the university campuses especially the University of Tehran. The small pseudo political groups under the pretext of 'student activities' launched expensive activities in various parts of the country in an effort to bring under their own control the various geographical parts of the country. But this plot, too, was thwarted by the vigilant masses in Iran and it did not in the least avail the United States.

For want of any better plan the United States eventually designed a military coup here to be implemented by its flunkies military figures and U.S. agents, a plot which was thwarted on July 9, 1980. The last and the most recent scheme of the United States has been the embroiling of Iran in a war by giving the signal to another of its servants, Saddam Hussein, on September 22, 1980. But the brave resistance of the people in Khuzestan and throughout the western parts of the country again outdid this weapon of the criminal United States.

CSO: 4600/183

U.S. ACCUSED OF UNDERMINING FORMATION OF ISLAMIC FRONT

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 23 Aug 81 pp 1,2

[Text] Let us ask why the Voice of America has recently broadcast the false rumor concerning the closure of the Palestinian Embassy in Iran?

And let us also ask why such a false rumor has been disseminated from this provocative Western media in these critical conditions, when:

- 1) The Islamic Republic of Iran has proposed to the Moslem world to consolidate a unified anti-Zionist Islamic front against Israel?
- 2) The Palestinian militants have expressed their profound support for the establishment of this unified Islamic front?
- 3) Iran's proposal for the consolidation of a unified Islamic front has been appreciated by Libya, following which U.S. Airforce planes gunned down two Libyan planes in the Mediterranean?
- 4) The Iraqi imposed war has reached a decisive climax which has motivated all political observers to speculate the inevitable defeat of the Ba'athist Armed Forces.
- 5) The Saudi conspiracy concerning the 7-point Peace Plan, has been proposed by Crown Prince Fahd to betray Palestinian ideals?

Let us further ask why the determined opponents of Israel have been pressurized by frequent threats of military assailancy? Yesterday it was Libya's turn. For a long time now the Egyptian Armed Forces, in collaboration with the U.S. have posed a military threat to the Eastern frontier borders of Libya and yesterday these plans were put into effect.

As a matter of fact the attacks inflicted on the Libyan planes testify to the fact that the U.S. has attacked the unified Islamic Front first. Political observers have anticipated that in the near future, Israel will mount attacks on Syria and that the world will witness fresh Israel incursions into Southern Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

Moreover, Iran is no exception to the possible attacks since certain baseless rumors appear to substantiate such a conviction. Political maneuvers of this kind shed light on two facts. They are as follows:

- a) The world colonizers have conspired an extensive political collusion for the Middle East, so as to stabilize the political status of Israel in the region.
- b) The Western conspirators of such a plot are quite apprehensive of the revolutionary potential of the committed opponents of Israel and, in consequence, they have adopted decisive measures to neutralize the imminent rebellion of the committed combatants against Zionist agents and to eventually eradicate these militants from the political scene.

We have already expounded on the 7-point Peace Plan, along with the extensive propaganda, accusing Iran of collaborating with Israel. We have already emphasized that such baseless broadcasts and especially the plot of the Saudi Peace Plan, are the major items of the conspiracy contrived by the Superpowers in the Middle East.

In the course of time, the treacherous tendencies of this Western conspiracy will be divulged.

With due consideration to the recent tactics employed by the propaganda networks and the political military centers, affiliated with imperialism, we arrive at the conclusion that the U.S. has mobilized its full potential to hatch the conspiracies we have spoken of.

The U.S. is no longer satisfied with Iraq's dispatching of numerous delegations to the Islamic and non-Islamic countries to defame Iran, as the collaborator of Israel. After all, the Voice of America, along with all the imperialist oriented Western media and even the fugitive Banisadr, have made tireless attempts to make the world believe this treacherous lie.

Banisadr, the fugitive Don Quixote, is so shameless that, in one of his interviews with an Iraqi magazine, he stated, "Several times I advised the government officials not to purchase arms from Israel but they did not listen to me." Perhaps, Banisadr, when he was saying these words, had forgotten that the same Iraqi magazine had published the documents, betraying his own clandestine relations with Israel.

The exploitative colonizers have mobilized all their potential against Iran, since the Islamic Republic regime has proposed the consolidation of a unified Islamic front against the Zionist invaders, an Islamic revolutionary venture. This Islamic revolutionary proposal will jeopardise the interests of the Superpowers in the Middle East.

The U.S. has, in view of these facts, become quite furious. At present, all the conscientious individuals are aware of the fact that all the committed militants for the liberation of Qods will be unified against Israel. In these critical moments, all the Arab nations have realized that if they fail to take advantage of the revolutionary potential of one billion Moslems for the emancipation of the Holy Land of Palestine, history will not forgive them.

No doubt this innovative Islamic front against Zionism will be triumphant stride towards ultimate victory in the course of 30 years of committed resistance against Israel. The Islamic origin of this anti-Zionist front foreshadows the ultimate success of our revolutionized campaign against the Zionist agents.

The unified Islamic front will totally eradicate the imperialist and Zionist colonizers. The overwhelming fear of the U.S. dominators of the name of such a front justifies our conviction. The whole tireless effort made by the expansionist Superpowers for the annihilation of the anti-Zionist front are quite futile.

NEW GOVERNMENT HIRING REGULATIONS ANTICIPATED

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 7 Sep 81 p 2

[Announcement by Secretary-General Abdollah Jasbi of the State Recruitment Organization]

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 6 (Pars)--The Secretary-General of the State Recruitment Organization, Abdollah Jasbi, announced yesterday afternoon that obstructive hiring regulations and differences in the salary of government employees would be removed soon, and a new recruitment law was due to replace the old one.

He said that there were 859,000 working and 603,000 non-working employees in government organizations. Considering them and their families the futures of 6 to 8 million people would be affected by any change in hiring regulations. Therefore, he added, these changes should only be made after careful studies. He said that it should be admitted that government employees, especially those with lower salaries, were under pressure which could be remedied with further financial aid if the war imposed by Iraq on Iran and other economic issues in the country permitted the government to do so.

Jasbi said that it had been decided to decrease, as much as possible, the gap between maximum and minimum salaries. He said that with ideological training, financial incentives would be superseded by moral motives in the working environment.

One of the great problems the government was faced with was the issue of those who were retired before the termination of their service, Jasbi said, adding that 31,000 people were retired last year. The retirements were inevitable in many cases but not necessary in others. He added that 90 billion rials made up the retirement budget, 50 billion rials of which was paid by the government and the rest of which was supplied by retirement deductions from the salaries of government employees.

CSO: 4600/183

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH LAW ISSUED

Baghdad BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 27 Aug 81 p 2

[Text]

A new public health law, abolishing and superseding a wide range of previously enacted laws, regulations and instructions that have been operative in the country over the past half century, has just been published in the official gazette and become operative with effect from the date of its publication.

The new law (No. 89 of 1981) provides in its general objectives that society is to guarantee the sound health of citizens including their physical and social fitness. It provides for preparation of an elaborate plan and ensuring material and moral prerequisites for dispensation of integrated health services.

Provisions of the law lay emphasis on optimal utilisation of health sector manpower and urges constant care in guaranteeing sound physical and mental health of the citizen, founding of a special administration of health institutions and centres and combatting transmitting and industrial diseases.

The law also provides for efficient rendering of care to family health and aged citizens, child and maternal care, school health, uplifting nutritional level of citizens and working out new regulations and conditions ensuring sound health environment for workers in factories and other places.

Provisions in the law call for protection and improvement of the environment, dissemination of health education and propagating health and environmental consciousness, caring for psychological and mental health, securing sufficient supplies of drugs, serums, vaccines and injections.

The law calls for integrated drug industry, generalisation of the centres for medical rehabilitation and physiotherapy services and artificial limbs, encouraging vocational and health education and improving educational level of workers in the health sector. It calls for development of preliminary medical studies

and promoting scientific research.

The law consists of five sections covering details of the general objectives, administration instructions, protective health, combatting transmitting diseases, therapeutic and health institutions in addition to disciplinary and organisational rules.

It upheld the element of planning in the health sector as essential for a balanced development in the sector and emphasised that protective health services represented the groundwork for activities of the Ministry of Health. The new law form-

ulated principles pertinent to citizens' good health and living conditions. There are provisions caring for hygienic conditions of public places and control measures in this connection.

Reasons given for enactment of the new law pointed to out-dated incoherent collections of laws and regulations that had been issued at different intervals when the health services had too limited scope. The expansions introduced on the health services after the 17th-30th July Revolution of 1968 necessitated the enactment of a more comprehensive, progressive law.

The new law aimed to match up with the phase of socialist construction in the country and answered preceptions and principles set for the health sector by the Political Report of the 8th Regional Conference of the Arab Ba'ith Socialist Party (ABSP).

The new law has provisions organising activities of health establishments and code of conduct governing the undertaking of duties by public health workers. The provisions also deal with preparation and training of medical and technical staff and refreshing cou-

rses for workers, technicians and staffers to keep pace with continuous development in the professional sphere.

The law provides for employment of developed technology to improve health services and worked out regulations for therapeutic health services both for the private and socialist sectors. Attention is given to health supervision to cover all public places and institutions.

An official source at the Ministry of Health regarded the enactment of the new law as representing the initiation of a new stage in the development of health services in the country. "It is a true revolution in the health sector assuring progressive services to citizens from the country's health and protective service institutions", he said.

The source said the law fitted well with the central goal of the Revolution and Party underlinking the humanity of the individual and acting in such resoluteness for assuring his good health. "It assures individuals good health which is necessary for his contribution in building up the bright future of Iraq", said the source.

AUTONOMOUS REGION SERVICE PROJECTS DETAILED

Baghdad BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 27 Aug 81 p 5

[Text] Despite the 12-month long war against Persian aggressors the autonomous region has realised a record of positive achievements in economic and social fields, said Mr Jamal Haj Sharif, Chairman of Region's Executive Council.

He added from the first day of the battle, The Iraqi Kurds mobilised all their resources to take part in the war, support the war effort and keep up the spirit of victory.

Mr Sharif said that the authorities concerned, achieved high percentages in carrying out development projects, whether individually or as part of a comprehensive plan.

On the type and cost of projects, he said the cost of projects carried out since the battle began, has exceeded ID. 20 million, including service, housing, educational, health, social and productive projects.

He asserted that work goes on to complete a number of similar projects all over the Region at a cost of more than ID 86 million, in addition to projects ordered by President Saddam Hussein upon his visit to the Region, costing ID. 57 million.

Autonomous Region's Chairman emphasised that exceptional efforts by employees of establishments during the battle resulted in achieving higher production rates with minimum labour due to the fact that many workers join the front lines, or guard economic establishments. These efforts achieved an increase of 20% in production, he said.

Iraqi Kurds have shown a readiness to take up arms, whether in the ranks of the regular armed forces, or the Popular Army, he added saying that Popular Army membership has increased considerably and continuously since the battle began and thousands of people enroll in weapons and combat-training courses.

Mr Mezhir Mutni, Arbil's Popular Army Commander asserts that such enthusiasm is not surprising at all, since it has been a symbol of Iraqi patriotism throughout the ages.

The great efforts of workers have resulted in production rates higher pre-war levels, he said.

Referring to the part of unions in the war, he said that it was of particular importance to aid the war effort and enlighten the mas-

ses on the real implications of the battle and the duties of citizens.

Unions in the region, he added, have sent hundreds of their members to weapon-training and civil defence courses, in addition to holding mobilization and production meetings. Women's union had been conspicuous in such activities, he concluded.

The Kurdish Autonomy Region's Municipalities and Resorts Administration has completed 75 municipal projects all over the region at a cost of ID. 2,295,000.

Mr Suad Habib, Secretary General of municipalities and resorts said these projects are distributed as follows:

Nineteen projects in Arbil province completed at a cost of ID 1,350,000, 29 in Sulaimaniya province, costing ID 1,850,000 and 27 in Duhok province at a cost of ID 2,095,000.

He pointed out that the Administration has finished other projects at a cost of over ID 30 million.

He reiterated that implementation and completion rate during the battle have intensified remarkably due to the increased efforts and determination of employees and workers in supporting the war-effort.

BAGHDAD WATER NETWORK TO BE IMPROVED

Baghdad BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 25 Aug 81 p 2

[Text]

The Baghdad drinking and raw water networks project, now under implementation by Amanat Al-Asima (the Mayorality of Baghdad), aims at the elimination of acute bottlenecks in water distribution caused by the desolate existing network constructed in 1924 which lacked the basic technical specifications for optimum utilisation of its capacity.



Dr. Adnan Aziz Jabro, Director General of the Baghdad Water Supply Administration (BWSA), said that the limited scope of applicability of the materials used in the old water pipes network, where iron, plastic and asbestos were applied represented a major hindrance. That caused extreme difficulties in effecting repairs of any casual defect.

"Proceeding from this, and at the directives of Amanat Al-Assima, the (BWSA) embarked on the replacement of this out-dated worn out network with an in-

tegrated and up-to-date ductile network. This network is expected to overcome water shortages and pipe defects which seriously affected supplies of water to consumers", he said.

Therefore, a contract was concluded in December, under the supervision of (BWSA), with the French firms Spie-Capag-Soba, Ponte Amacon, Spie-Patignolles and Seureca for execution of civil, pumping, extension and design works.

Highest specifications were adopted for the planned network, to ensure the required level of efficiency for this vital public utility. The contract came into effect in March 1981 and actual work on the project started in June.

The contract provided that the 1600 mm diameter pipeline skeleton networks are to be completed in 1981, whereas further extensions of the 300-100 mm dia pipes and final connections to consumers dwellings should be finalized during 1982-83. The central area expected to be covered by this project lies between Palestine street in Risafa, Al-Rabbi

street in Karkh, south of Jadiriya and Khadhimiya. The 1500 km. long network was designed to fulfill Baghdad's needs for purified water till the year 2000.

Five raw-water pumping stations, with a capacity of 100 millions gallons per day, are planned to be erected on the river Tigris according to the same contract.

These stations were designed to provide the city's needs for raw-water till the year 2000 and to provide necessary irrigation for the future green belt of Baghdad, thus substituting 27 insufficient minor pumping stations presently in operation depending for its water supplies on the Army Canal and Al-Khair stream.

Implementation of this project is carried out alongside efforts exerted by the Sewerage Administration and other service offices

for the modernization of electricity, telephone and coaxial cables within the area of Baghdad, and in coordination with Amanat Al-Assima to ensure reconstruction of roads on completion of work indicated above.

Complementary to the drinking water pipes network are 16 new ground reservoirs with a total storing capacity of 220 million gallons. These will be constructed by the Baghdad Water Supply Administration during 1982 to replace the high water storage reservoirs currently in use.

This integrated project is rightly represented a unique experiment in the fact of total replacement of existing water supply network for a major city as Baghdad and for a set period of execution which is a record time for a project of such magnitude.

CSO: 4300/109

CORN PRODUCTION, CULTIVATING TECHNIQUES CITED

Baghdad BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 22 Aug 81 p 2

[Article by Clela Khoshaba]

[Text]

The province of Babylon, central Iraq, which is the principal maize production province with maize-cultivated areas representing 70 percent of the country's maize producing areas, is expecting a bumper maize harvest this autumn.

Areas cultivated with this crop for the present season reached 71,263 donums including 41,903 donums within farmlands belonging to the General Commission for Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, 19,387 donums belonging to the State Enterprise of Agriculture and 9,973 donums within farmlands of the Babylon Agricultural Project.

Marketing of the crop is made through three main centres distributed on geographic basis within the province-one at the centre of the province, Hilla, the two others at Madhathiya and Mashroua Sub-Districts. each centre contains large yards and warehouses for storage and a plant for separating and drying up the crop.

The plant at the centre of the Province has a capacity of 10 tons per hour to which are attached two large yards and storage installations on an area of 37,000 square meters in addition to newly introduced modern equipment used for

separating and drying up the maize crops to increase the capacity of the plant.

The plant at Madhathiya has a capacity of 10 tons per hour with a yard of 17,000 square meters and three warehouses as well as three dryer machines and scaling equipment. The third, at Mashroua, has a capacity of 40 tons per hour to which are attached a storage yard 17,000 square meters in area and warehouses and an automatic ground scale.

Maize cultivation in the province of Babylon first began in 1969 on an area of 35,000 donums. The provi-

nce's maize farming potentials have since assumed a wide scale with areas planted in the crop over the past few years reached 70,000 donums.

Among the factors that encouraged large-scale cultivation of this crop are the suitability of the soil and the proper timing sowing operations made in the month of July, just after completion of the wheat and barley harvest season.

The farmer, having completed his wheat and barley harvest, resorts to tilling the land and sowing it with the maize crop instead of leaving the land fallow for the next season. The easy process of maize plantation and the high fertility of the land with proven high encouraged farmers to expand plantations year after year.

Maize plantations, with produce ranging between 750-1500 per donum, are distributed in the areas of Kifl, Nile, Madhatiya, Shumali, Mashroua and Musayyab. These are but the main crop areas although it is now the practice for every farmer in the province to grow up maize in their farms.

Agricultural authorities have increased the encouragement of maize plantation in view of the economic and industrial benefits of this

crop and its close link with the development of animal wealth in Iraq. Maize is used as raw material in animal fodder production owing to its high rate of protein. It is also an important source of starch and liquid oil.

The crop can be mixed at certain rates with wheat and barley flour in the production of bread and its ears after separating the corns are used in the production of papers. The crop is cultivated in two stages, in the spring starting March and ending in June, the second in autumn starting July and ending November.

The autumn season is more common with high yield compared with the spring stage which blossoms in June which is the hot month in the country and exposing the crop to the risks of damage.

The most common variety of the crop in the province is the Nilium, which is of Pakistani origin first introduced in the country by the state farms. The crop is treated twice during its cultivation with Diazinon. First after tillage and sowing in 20 days, the second after 35 days. This treatment is essential for success of the plantation.

BRIEFS

HIGHWAY PROJECTS--Anbar Province roads directorate is building a number of highways, 805 km. in length, and a number of bridges, at a total cost of ID 79,900,000. The highways include the Haditha-Qaem route, the strategic line route, the H2-Rutba route, the Nakhil-Kilo 160 route, the Kobeisa-cement factory, the New Hit-Kobeisa, the Qaem-Akkashat-Rutba, and two routes linking Haditha with the Haditha irrigation dam. In addition, the Ramadi-Rahaliya desert route will be paved, as well as the Majarra-Falluja road, and a branch road linking Haqlaniya with Haditha-Qaem route. The projects also include building floating bridges at Rawa, and Juwaina east, Haditha, Bezbyz, Albu Shajal, and a fixed bridge in the Hajlan valley and the Nusr square intersection in Habbaniya. Further, 11 traffic control points will be set up on highways and a workshop for motor vehicles. On the other hand another batch of projects should be finished this year built at a cost of ID 107 million, including the Rawa-Ramana road, the Rawa-Hatra road, the Ramadi-Samarra highway road, the Fatha-Haditha road, and the fixed bridges at Ramadi, Falluja, and Khalidiya, at a cost of ID. 14 million, and five crossings in a number of villages at a cost of ID. 150,000. [Text] [Baghdad BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 28 Aug 81 p 7]

CSO: 4300/109

STRONGER U.S. MIDEAST POLICY URGED

Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 16 Jul 81 p 5

[Article by Prof Amos Perlmutter: "AWAC Aircraft as a Substitute"]

[Text] At the height of the riot surrounding the proposed sale of the AWAC aircraft to Saudi Arabia, one thing became more and more clear. The United States has no clear policy vis-a-vis the Mideast and the Persian Gulf.

The administration has yet to make a clear-cut decision that a new lodestone is needed for its relations with its allies and with the various regimes in this vital area. The basis of the test must be realpolitik and not desires of the heart; it must include the difficult question: "What will you do for us?"

There is a difficulty in the adoption of such an approach, for throughout more than 30 years there has been no decisive American policy at all vis-a-vis the Mideast. In its place, U.S. governments have nurtured various approaches to Arab rulers and the interests of royal dynasties in the region in the hope of enjoying an exchange. No justification has been found for these anticipations.

Now it is necessary to say to the Arabs and to their governments that for them to receive military or other support they must grant the United States something in exchange. They should not be allowed to discharge their obligation by lip service about petroleum prices; the thing must be expressed in military or political coin. The Arab governments, and particularly Saudi Arabia, must know that the United States is prepared to protect the petroleum but not necessarily the rulers of the petroleum.

The AWAC stumbling block (as was the F-15 issue) is an eminent example of giving (in this case sale) with no quid pro quo whatever.

The Mideast experts in the American State Department who perhaps were taken aback by the public outcry that arose concerning the sale of the AWAC planes, are now promising that the Saudis will not receive the planes equipped with the special radar or without specific American military support, and that the planes will not be used by the Saudis against Israel. This is like the man who acquires a vehicle without wheels and who, sooner or later, will return to get the wheels he needs. Sooner or later the Saudis will return to demand the sophisticated accessories, precisely as they have done in the matter of the F-15 aircraft.

This is not policy. This is not even strategy. This is the changing of policy into small coins whenever a request is heard. This particular dance has demonstrated that the American State Department lacks leadership or that Secretary of State Alexander Haig has changed his views from one extreme to the other regarding the assurances proclaimed in the past. What is clear is that the Mideast experts who have been retained from previous administrations are still plying their old profession and supporting the Arab issue.

The problem of Secretary of State Haig expresses itself, among other things, in the fact that he is apt to try to recapture for himself a degree of influence at the White House after having been sorely wounded in a number of bureaucratic encounters with Vice President Bush and Defense Secretary Weinberger, one of those advocating the sale of the AWAC aircraft and its connection with the sale of the F-15. Even before Reagan took office, he promised the Saudi defense people that the Reagan Administration would support the sale of the AWACs. And why the surprise? For, as bad luck would have it, Weinberger served in the past in the top ranks of the Bechtel Company.

It appears that Haig is not an important factor in the deliberations on the issue of the Mideast. Now it becomes clear that the visit of Haig to the Mideast in which he attempted to gain supporters for the concept of a strategic consensus of the Reagan Administration, according to which Israelis and the Arabs would together be included in a collective security arrangement under American protection against communism and international terrorism, did not succeed.

The concept of a strategic consensus is not new. This is the other side of the overall political arrangement of Carter-Brzezynski.

The overall policy arrangement strives to bring Israel and the Arab states to an overall peace conference. That is utopian. As opposed to this, the strategic consensus policy strives to bring Israel and the Arabs to indirect cooperation, the goal of which is to defend the Mideast against the Soviets. This aspiration is even more fanciful.

The strategic consensus is an American-Mideast innovation. The thought and the hope contained in it are that the moderate Arabs, such as Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, as well as Israel, will be armed with the armaments required to remove the Soviet threat. Thus, each government will be eligible on a bilateral basis--in the course of time even on a collective basis, a sort of a Mideast NATO--for the protection of an American anti-Soviet umbrella.

This strategic idea will be detached from reality for as long as the Arabs who are labeled moderate, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, support the extremist Arabs such as Iraq and the PLO and, even more than that, are their allies.

In effect, the strategic consensus takes the place of strategic balance which was the American version for the Mideast over the past 4 decades. In the past, strategic considerations were based on a 1 to 3 military ratio between the Arabs and Israel, and the United States and Israel together strived for the maintenance of this balance. The thing was based on the capabilities of the governments in the region and not on their aspirations.

The new concept will undermine the military balance in the Mideast in favor of the Arab states. According to the doctrine of the strategic consensus, the United States need not refrain from an unlimited arming of the states in the Mideast and in the Persian Gulf, subject only to the limitation of the wealth of each state.

The Arab peninsula, rich in petrodollars, may become the storehouse of arms until even the United States--irrespective of the degree of its supervision--may one day find there a hellish revolution led by a Saudi Qadhdhafi or, worse, by a Sunni Saudi Khomeyni.

The Israelis, who are aghast at the strategic consensus, are as mistaken as are their American friends. The Arabs see Israel, not the Soviet Union, as their principal enemy. Their arms, even the arms of the Saudis, are directed against Israel, not against the Soviet Union.

The single basis on which Mideast policy can be established is the Camp David process and within the framework of this process the American-Israeli-Arab strategy can mature with the passage of time.

8090

CSO: 4323/35

SECULAR ELECTORATE URGED TO ORGANIZE TO OPPOSE CLERICAL AIMS

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 Jul 81 p 7

[Article by Natan Donevitz: "Anti-Clerical Organization Needed"]

[Text] I won't be mistaken if I argue that many present-day Israeli citizens would now like to see a serious organization, supra-party, of personalities and institutions opposed to the clerical goals in Israeli politics. These goals are not new, the pressures were not created today, but factors have arisen that pose to the interests of the secular, who are the majority in the state, a danger greater than ever before.

Greater because over the past 4 years the religious, and in particular Agudath Yisrael, have achieved what they set out to attain from the governments of MAPAI, of Labor and of the Alignment. Much had been accomplished even before, but barriers had been raised against their demands. During the first administration of the LIKUD, many of these barriers were breached.

Now a situation has arisen in which many of the cardinal demands of the religious parties (which compete among themselves for the votes of the religious voters) have been met, and now, along with the demands in the field of finances, in which Aguda people have become highly competent, they are required to come up with additional demands outside the field of religion. As a result, they seek, apparently, to forbid the residents of Haifa to ride public transportation on the Sabbath, as has been customary; to forbid the residents of the Ramot Quarter in Jerusalem from driving along the road that has acquired notoriety because of the stone-throwing on the part of the Orthodox; and to legally ban the selling of non-kosher meat in steakhouses, restaurants and butcher shops. And, of course, additional stringency on the issue of "Who is a Jew?"

These are the "ideas" that the Aguda people have raised. The NRP cannot remain passive. Today, more than ever, it must put up a fight so that those Israelis who are observers of tradition and who voted for them this time as well will not be drawn to Agudat Yisrael during the next election. It should be borne in mind that the great majority of NRP supporters, who this time turned their backs on this party, is young. Veterans and the aged remain faithful to the NRP. From several standpoints, the image of the Aguda appears to them to be more desirable than it is to the young people. And the NRP is required--if it wishes not to lose them as well--to appear in the eyes of the veteran and the senior voter as

the guardian of the embers of the faith no less than the Aguda and the Council of the Torah Sages. Thus, more demands by the National Religious Party [NRP] in the area of faith can be expected. Thus it has always been and thus it is reasonable to assume it will be this time as well.

I would not be surprised if from the ranks of the NRP will come once again the cry to close the movie houses on Friday evenings, to ban theater, music and dance performances. And it will also be required of the NRP to set forth--because of the competition with the Aguda--demands in matters of the Rabbinical Courts, dietary laws, conversion and so forth.

Against this pressure and militant organization of two groups who are a small minority in Israel, and in view of their fear of losing even more of their strength after the disappearance of the PAI (Workers of Agudat Yisrael) from the Knesset, and of the heavy blow that was dealt to the head of the NRP--against all of this, it should be expected that the secular public, which is not as organized as the religious, will finally get itself together to defend its vital interests.

Broad Organization

I don't mean another organization of another small group, party or quasi-party, but rather something far more encompassing, large and strong, of intellectuals and economists (one of the demands set forth: the banning, by force of law, of work on projects on the Sabbath), people from the arts and communications, jurists, scientists, and anyone who believes that there is a need for such an organization. And with no party domination, or "sponsorship" of professionals from the area of the war against religion. My intent is for a broad public party that crosses party boundaries, an organization whose prestige and importance will also influence the establishment of an antireligious "lobby" in the Knesset.

Note what took place last week: Three representatives of Agudat Yisrael are received by the prime minister--three notables in Torah who are not teachers of the generation, but who are businessmen and merchants. In their honor, the prime minister dons a large skullcap, is positioned among them, embraces them (as is his wont) and is photographed for the public.

I haven't seen Mr Begin don his skullcap in every secret conference, in the Knesset or in its cafeteria, with representatives of the NRP or the Aguda. Suddenly something new--a skullcap on his pate. It is the privilege of Mr Begin, just as it is the privilege of every Jew, to don a skullcap. That's his affair. And who are we to utter a word about that? However, this act of protest, in an official position--this has already been borrowed from another "opera." I understand that if Mr Begin is invited to a circumcision, or to a wedding, or, Heaven forbid, to a funeral--it is understandable that a Jew such as he, who is so near to the religion and tradition of Israel, dons a skullcap. Not to mention at a meeting with a great rabbinical personage, or a visit to a synagogue or to a holy site. But for the purpose of a photographed meeting with three of the Commandment Angels of the Aguda!

Picture of a Situation

The skullcap, in this instance, must kindle a number of alarms in anyone to whom civil liberty is precious. Those three came on a mission of a party which, during its election campaign broadcasts, displayed a young woman wearing an astonished expression and explaining to the young women voters how Agudat Yisrael helped her avoid being conscripted into the IDF. They broadcast the image of this woman of spirit time after time. And the prime minister, who is also minister of defense, dons a skullcap in their honor and embraces them in a pose resembling that of a school graduation picture. Beautiful, Mr Minister of Defense, a beauty of a picture!

To change the picture, and so that four Knesset members of 120 will not bring about the curtailing of the rights of the majority of the citizens of the state, the secular electorate has a duty to organize itself.

8090

CSO: 4323/35

NAVY SEEKS TECHNOLOGICAL SOPHISTICATION

Tel Aviv BAMAHAHE in Hebrew 2 Jul 81 pp 16-17, 51

[Interview with a senior naval officer in charge of weapons systems on Navy Day by Hayim Raviv; date and place not specified]

[Text] The disclosure of the new weapons systems in use by the Israeli Navy--the Aliyah-type missile boat with a deck for a naval helicopter and a Harpoon surface-to-surface missile--reflects only the very tip of the "technological dimension" which is intensifying in the navy to meet the growing Arab naval threat to Israel. One could get this impression from an interview which I conducted on Navy Day with a senior naval officer who is in charge of weapons systems beginning this week.

For understandable reasons it is not possible to publish the entire interview, however even the little which can be released is enough to arouse pride and a feeling of security that those who are responsible for the naval front are doing well in coping with the problems of current security and are also accurately projecting the future battlefield and are preparing accordingly.

At the beginning of the interview I asked the senior officer--young, handsome but with a serious, somewhat hardened facial expression--to cite the main milestones in the development of the navy.

[Answer] In the short history of the Israeli Navy one can discern three main periods: the period in which the focal point was the War of Independence; the period between the eve of Operation Kadesh and the first days after the Six-Day War; and the period after the Six-Day War in which the focal point was the navy's achievements in the Yom Kippur War.

Up to and including the Six-Day War, the main strength of the navy was based on outmoded ships such as destroyers, torpedo boats, and frigates. After the war, in the 1967-1968 period, the development of the navy began to be accelerated. The sinking of the destroyer Elat by the Egyptians, who were equipped with modern missile systems, stimulated this process which was expressed by the navy's entrance into the missile age. The first missile boats were built in France in the famous Cherbourg shipyards, and they arrived in Israel in 1968 after a trip of about 6000 km. The boats arrived without weapons systems and without being outfitted.

Exploiting the Advantages of the Missile Boat

In the first stage the boats were equipped only with guns, however after an intensive and extended effort, they were equipped with modern weapons systems including missiles. The upgrading, build-up of the forces and their training, extensive combat experience, and the daily, vigorous, routine preparation for the future left their imprint in the navy's brilliant operations and successes in the Yom Kippur War. These successes constitute the navy's acme of action in protecting the security of Israel. In this war a basic doctrine which the navy developed was implemented: Viewing the attack as a most effective defense method and the hope of stopping the enemy boats in their own bases. Unlike the Six-Day War, this time the navy had available the proper missiles and equipment to carry out the doctrines which it had adopted.

The results of the war proved that we have learned how to exploit all the tactical advantages of the missile boat and the weapons systems which have been developed for it through the years.

Against the background of the Yom Kippur War and the fact that the enemy demonstrated in this war that he understands the significance of sea space (among other things, this was reflected in the blockading of the Bab el-Mandeb Straits), the navy intensified its efforts to develop the missile boats, and it is continuing this effort in order to respond to the challenges of the future.

[Question] What are the navy's basic missions?

[Answer] The navy has a series of missions in the area of current security and in the area of preparing for war. In the area of current security, the navy's main task today is to maintain security along the country's coasts and to prevent the penetration of terrorist teams from the sea, and in this way to eliminate the possibility of attacks against vital population centers. Another of the navy's tasks today is to guarantee freedom of movement for Israel's merchant ships in the international sea lanes. It must be remembered that these sea lanes pass within missile range of at least some of the Arab navies.

[Question] Which enemy forces is the Israeli Navy confronted with today?

[Answer] After the peace agreement with Egypt, we face today the navies of Libya, Syria, and perhaps also Algeria. The Libyan Navy is growing daily, above and beyond all proportion, with all types of ships, submarines, and both eastern and western weapons systems.

The other countries like Syria, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq are not lagging behind it. The number of enemy ships which are streaming into the area are creating an unprecedented balance of power.

The enemy's navies are equipped with ships and sophisticated weapons systems which originate not only in the East but also in the West, and as is known, these countries have no problem of money to purchase ships with advanced technology.

[Question] How is the navy preparing to cope with the enemy?

[Answer] The face of the area has changed, and the Arab maritime threat to Israel has taken on new significance. The Israeli navy cannot compete in the number of ships with the navies of the enemy. It must cope with them with a higher quality combatant and with more advanced technology.

Another prerequisite is the proper deployment in the area which will permit the navy to meet any possible trouble. We must be everywhere at all times in order not to permit the enemy to press the button before us. The future war is likely to continue for a long time. The Yom Kippur War taught us that we are likely to become involved in a prolonged situation. In the last war we surprised them, and I hope that also in the next war, if it breaks out, we will again surprise them. Although they already know how we did this, in the meantime we have made considerable progress and the problem which we will have to deal with is how to seek out and find the enemy's weak point so that we can launch the projectile toward the forehead of "Goliath" and hit him precisely and defeat him. Recently the navy was equipped with missiles which can operate beyond the horizon. With the aid of helicopters which are positioned on the deck of our boats, we are able to detect the enemy better.

Three Israeli Advantages

[Question] What is the navy's advantage over the enemy navies?

[Answer] I would cite the human factor as the primary advantage. On a boat which must operate as an oiled machine, the human factor has enormous importance. The personal ability of the sailor as an individual and that of the ship's crew as a collective permit us to master the sophisticated systems which the advanced technology has brought us.

The ship commanders in the navy and their officer corps are from the very best. These are young men who have been carefully selected and trained to be officers and to command in long and predetermined courses of study. The navy has spared no resources in order to train its officers in the best possible way, and as was stated, only the best among them have remained. Like them, the ships' crews are also from the best in the navy. Generally speaking, they come to the ships as volunteers, with advanced training and high motivation.

An additional advantage is the effectiveness of naval intelligence. It must be remembered that we are dealing today with systems that permit greater detection ranges, something which is likely to cause a distortion of the battle picture. In this complexity, we must locate the true enemy. This is a problem in itself since the sea space in which we are operating is crawling with neutral targets and ships of foreign powers. An unintentional attack on such a ship is likely to cause complications for the State of Israel. On this point I would like to note that our naval intelligence has not disappointed us to date, and I am certain that it will not disappoint us also in the future.

The third advantage is the recognition of the area and those who are working in it. This recognition helps us to exploit in a war all the possible advantages and to prevent the enemy from surprising us.

The three factors which I have cited--the human, recognition of the area, and intelligence through the integration of the sophisticated weapons systems--represent the answer to the enemy navies.

[Question] The Arab navies are bringing into their ranks foreign experts who are involved in training them in the use of the most sophisticated equipment. In light of the progress in the Arab navies also in ships, the question is asked if there is no concern that in the course of time we will also lose the qualitative advantage?

[Answer] Although it is true that some of the Arab navies can learn and advance with the aid of those experts, it must be remembered however that these experts have not had our experience on the battlefield, and this is where we have the advantage. It can be said that we have acquired with precious blood the combat doctrine and the skill in the operation of weapons.

In the final analysis, the victor in the future battle will be the side which is able to detect faster the weak points of the other side and to exploit them to its benefit. This action is not carried out by foreign experts but by trained combat crews who are knowledgeable of warfare and well versed in all its secrets.

[Question] What is the navy's technological response to the terrorist organizations' attempts to attack from the sea?

[Answer] We are striving for a situation in which we will succeed in "closing" the coast as is the case on the northern border. We initiated this process after we discovered a number of penetrations. The attacks on Nahariya, Ma'agan Mikhael, and Tel Aviv made it unequivocally clear that every effort must be made to close the coast in order to assist the patrolling naval forces. We have learned that every penetration of the State of Israel from the sea has had tragic results and has severely shaken the morale of the people. We are now in an advanced state of implementing the plan which will constitute the suitable response to the attempts by the terrorist organizations to attack us on the one hand and will permit us better control over the sea space of the State of Israel on the other hand.

[Question] What are the main elements of the navy's plans in the area of the development of weapons systems?

[Answer] The ships which we now have for the most part have passed part of their lifespan. The balance of forces between us and the enemy navies continues to worsen. These two reasons together require us to invest every effort to modernize the navy in all areas--guided-missile ships, submarines, and landing craft and to improve all the weapons systems in order for us to be able to cope with the quantitative strength of the Arab navies.

There are numerous plans. We have just now completed the determination of the requirements for the future ships, and we are beginning the planning and production which will conclude in a few years. In this framework, ships will be built in sizes that will permit them to remain at sea for a long time and in this way to eliminate the possibility of surprise.

It must be remembered that the budget problem exists and also affects us, however by recognizing the most urgent needs and by setting a proper scale of priorities, I believe that we can overcome this obstacle.

From Wild Imagination to A Useful System

[Question] What distinguishes the work of the Israeli Navy in the development of weapons systems?

[Answer] Our uniqueness is in the fact that we represent a small and sophisticated force which functions with effective systems. Unlike other armed forces in which there is a vast difference between the technical officer and the operations officer and virtually no contact between them, with us they work closely, practically 24 hours a day. Moreover, there is close coordination between the sailor and the military industries. Thanks to this closeness, we are able to produce integrated and sophisticated naval weapons systems in short periods of time while in enlightened countries like the United States or in Europe, it takes twice as long or even longer.

[Question] How does the technique of processing ideas or findings work within the structure of the navy and what is the extent of the contribution of these ideas?

[Answer] Every sailor who comes up with an idea which can improve one of the ship's systems can write it down and send it to me for consideration. I am happy to point out that the response has been great. Tens of such ideas come to me and are reviewed by a technical committee which I head. If the committee decides that the idea has merit and can be implemented, we pass a recommendation for the review and approval of the navy commander. After the commander's approval, there begins the process of development which at times is a lengthy one since it consists of numerous stages including: Determination of operational requirements, initial planning, preparation of specifications, production of models, and tests of the system. If the series of tests is successful, we go into production and installation of the systems on the ships.

[Question] Can you provide a number of examples, and what do you estimate to be the rate of ideas which have been accepted?

[Answer] As I stated, there are many ideas, however one example will suffice, one which involves the improvement of the capability to control the missile boats. In this case, like in other cases, the ideas were the fruit of wild imagination, however they have been converted into a useful weapons system.

Generally speaking, I can say that of all the ideas that come to me, about 10 percent of them eventually reach the stage of operational implementation.

[Question] Finally, it is customary to think that the air force is able to go anywhere, and the proof is Entebbe and the atomic reactor. Can this also be said about the navy?

[Answer] Yes, and how!

5830

CSO: 4323/32

BRIEFS

FRUIT CULTIVATION EXPERIMENT--Tests to grow deciduous fruit trees--apple, peach and plum--in very meager, chalky and rock-laden soil in the plant project of Beyt Nekufa in the Jerusalem corridor, have been crowned with success. A staff of researchers from the Plant Institute in the Agricultural Research Administration at Beyt Dagan has discovered that daily feeding and watering, as is customary for pruned plants, brings about good development of the trees and high harvests. Success of the test opens the door to the planting of thousands of dunums of inferior, chalky and rocky land in the mountain region which until now were not exploited. At the cooperative initiative of the Plant Regional Commission of Matey Yehuda, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Jewish Agency and the Fruit Growers Organization, there was established in 1977 a plant project of Beyt Nekufa designed to investigate the possibilities of raising deciduous fruit trees in inferior and rocky soil. The professional administration of the project was placed in the hands of a research staff headed by Dr Yitzhaq Klein of the Agricultural Research Administration and with the cooperation of Mr Elimelekh Barkhan of the Agricultural Committee of the farms of Matey Yehuda. The researchers tested two levels of fertilizers that are introduced by means of irrigation water in various planting gaps as well as irrigation by droplets, by spray and by discontinuous watering. At the end of 4 years of tests, it was revealed that watering by droplets with the addition of fertilizers in the first years of the plants' existence brought about accelerated development of the trees and sufficiently high fruit yield by the fourth year. About 1.6 tons to the dunum of peaches and about 1.5 tons of apples were gathered. The anticipated harvest this year is about 3 tons of peaches per dunum. [Text] [Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Jul 81 p 5] 8090

CSO: 4324/35

BRIEFS

'DEMOCRATIC GROUP' PROTEST--Police were called on when a number of university students, calling themselves "The Democratic Group" staged a protest demonstration outside Sheraton Hotel on Sunday night. The students--one of them a girl--carrying placards dispersed without incident when the police moved in. The students were protesting the eighth conference of the National Union for Kuwait Students, which was going on the hotel, under the patronage of Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saad Abdullah. The conference, which was being staged after a lapse of seven years, was opened by the Minister of Communications, Dr. Yacoub Al Ghoneim, who is also the university chancellor. Al Ghoneim told the students that the future of Kuwait was in their hands. It was their duty, now, he said, to prepare for the stage when they would be involved in the running of the country. The chairman of the preparatory committee for the conference urged the students to abide by the union constitution to ensure the continued success of the union. He reminded them of the crises the union faced seven years ago, which almost brought about its collapse. The Palestinian Liberation Organisation representative, Nabeel Ansari, told the gathering the events of the past 15 days proved the capability of Palestinians not only to maintain the struggle with the enemy but also emerge victorious. [Text] [Kuwait KUWAIT TIMES in English 25 Aug 81 p 3]

CSO: 4300/108

AMAL MEMBER COMMENTS ON LEBANESE SITUATION, SECTARIANISM

Paris AL-NAHAE AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic No 217, 29 Jun to 5 Jul 81, pp 11-13

[Interview with member of Amal movement and Chamber of Deputies, Mr Husayn al-Husayni, by 'Abd al-Hadi Mahfuz; date and place not given]

[Text] "The Shiites Are Not an Extension of Iran or of Any Other Country."

"Those Who Accuse the Muslims of Not Being Loyal to Lebanon Basically Consider That Lebanon Is Theirs Alone, and It Is on This Basis That They Demand That the Muslims Be Loyal to Lebanon."

"As For Those Who Belong to the Lebanese Front, They Are Part of Our Nation and We Cannot Abandon Them Or Contribute Toward Increasing Their Involvement."

"The Dialogue Cannot Take Place Except Through the Legitimate Government."

In a meeting which could be described as more than an interview and less than a dialogue, Deputy Husayn al-Husayni presented his view of the situation to AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI. He asserted that the Amal movement is not a sectarian movement, that the Shiites ~~seem~~ considers Lebanon to be its homeland, and that it is not an extension of Iran or of any other country.

As far as the Lebanese crisis is concerned, al-Husayni did not appear to be very optimistic. He said: "The solutions which have been proposed are no more than temporary truces. The reason for this is that the South is the core of the Lebanese problem, and it is still not taken into consideration when proposing solutions."

His opinion is that the elimination of the sectarian orientation presupposes that there must first be elimination of discrimination between sects and then elimination of political sectarianism in a subsequent stage. He considers that the policy of having equal representation for Muslims and Christians in the Chamber of Deputies, within the framework of free elections within a single [election] district, will contribute greatly toward having everyone have the same feeling of national loyalty toward Lebanon. But as far as the office of President of the Republic is concerned, he feels that there is no harm in having this remain in the hands of the Christians "because this is in the higher interest of the Arab nations."

Concerning the army, he said that the political authorities were shirking their responsibilities and were making the army bear the responsibility for their mistakes. Al-Husayni feels that dissolution of the army would lead to people losing hope in having a united Lebanon. As far as the National Accord is concerned, his views are based on one simple principle: "By means of the legitimate government we can have a dialogue with all Lebanese groups."

Here is a transcript of the interview:

[Question] What are the Shiite institutions which were created by Imam [Musa] al-Sadr and which he participated in forming? What is the relationship between them and the Lebanese National Movement? On what basis does a religious movement establish co-operative relations with a leftist group which is predominantly of a Marxist nature?

[Answer] I exempt myself in advance from being compelled to give an answer from the Shiite point of view. We fundamentally, and as far as our goals are concerned, reject any sectarianism which is at the expense of our nation. When we say "Shiites," this designation mainly means to us the people who live in [Lebanon's] deprived areas which have constituted a basic shortcoming in the national formation [of Lebanon]. Using this concept as a basis, the first action was to create an institution which could give expression to this shortcoming since a large social group had not had any actual existence on the political level. The result was the founding of the Higher Shiite Islamic Council which is more secular than religious in nature. After only a short time had gone by, Imam [Musa] al-Sadr and the group which was working together with him discovered that, in view of the fact that this Council included all groups, from the far right to the far left, the only possible result would be that their decisions would be predominantly of a compromise nature and would not result in any actual position taken. Therefore it was necessary to form Amal, the movement of deprived people, as a means by which to achieve this basic goal. The goal is to have all groups and all regions of Lebanon participate in making fundamental national choices. This is a necessary first step in order to have Lebanese society merge into a single national Lebanese melting pot. If this can be done, we will have eliminated people's feeling of being subjected and deprived, and we will have made all regions of Lebanon become fundamental regions in our national entity.

Through practical application as well as in view of the complicated nature of Lebanese political relationships, which demand a great deal of experience on the part of those who are politically active, it was necessary that the formation of the National Front for the Preservation of the South be carried out by politicians having long experience in the political arena. Furthermore, they have been committed to our policy since the beginning. At this point I must emphasize that the Amal movement is neither of a religious nor sectarian nature. If it should become thus, then this, by definition, would mean that its existence is no longer justified.

In view of what I have said above, it is clear that the function of the Higher Shiite Council cannot be the function of the Amal movement. The function of the Amal movement cannot be the function of the National Front for the Preservation of the South. Each of these frameworks has a role which exists in its own right. There is no organizational relationship between these various frameworks, but all of them have

a common political goal. As for our relations with the National Movement, they are like relations which we have with any of the groups. We are in agreement with any group which shares our views, concerns, and interests, and we differ with any group which has differences with us in these regards. These groups which have been mentioned have their complete view with regard to the Lebanese situation and tragedy, and they have their complete program for putting an end to this tragedy and for a future formula for Lebanon. This view was established and ratified in joint meetings in 1977, and was announced at that time, and during every dialogue and every consultation we have remained committed to the contents of this view. What I could do is mention the most important guidelines of this view, especially those concerning the entity and identity of Lebanon.

The Shiites' Basic Homeland

[Question] Concerning this point, do you consider Lebanon to be the homeland for the Lebanese and the Shiites?

[Answer] In our working paper, we have said that we consider, as our homeland, the Lebanon whose borders are internationally recognized. We consider Lebanon to be a sovereign, independent state, in accordance with the wishes of all of its inhabitants, and we consider Lebanon to be an Arab country which is an inalienable part of the Arab world. We feel that Lebanon should share the fruits of the Arab world, and that it should be committed to the vital causes of this Arab world.

[Question] If Lebanon is your homeland, what is the extent of involvement of Lebanon's Shiites with the Shiites of Iran? Do you consider yourselves to be an extension of Iran? Is there a need to clarify this?

[Answer] I have already mentioned the fact that we are against the idea of sectarian entities. We reject the establishment of a Shiite entity just as we reject the other sectarian entities. But we did, and still do, support the Iranian Islamic revolution from two standpoints. First of all, we support this revolution because its previous regime, the regime of the shah of Iran, cooperated with Israel and was hostile to the Arabs with regard to their vital causes. Also, this regime theoretically represented a Shiite majority. For the Shiites, it constituted a great burden and a weak spot which made it acceptable for others to both accuse and be suspicious of the Shiites. It is for this reason that the fall of this regime was a relief to Shiites, wherever they were. And what if the new regime would begin supporting the Arabs in their vital causes? Secondly, Israel had succeeded in neutralizing both the Islamic and Christian worlds with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. In fact, Israel was even able to obtain the support of many Muslim and Christian nations. This happened at a time when the most important element of this conflict was the fact that Zionism was striving to destroy the heritages of both Muslims and Christians. The establishment of a regime in Iran which is hostile to Israel is conducive to putting an end to this process of neutralization and to paving the way for other Muslim and Christian nations to undertake to intervene in order to protect the heritages of both the Muslims and Christians in Palestine.

So from these two standpoints alone we support the Islamic revolution in Iran, but we are not an extension of Iran or of anybody else. This is particularly true since Lebanon has a nature all its own, and since it would not be right to propose for

Lebanon any religious ideology which might have a harmful effect on the higher vital interest of the Lebanese--which is coexistence between the various sects and the members thereof.

[Question] Imam Musa al-Sadr used to ascribe a fundamental role to the legitimate Lebanese government and support it in the realization of the Accord. How do the Shiite establishments stand with regard to this policy of the Imam?

[Answer] Imam [Musa] al-Sadr, and his group, feel that there are points of agreement with the legitimate government, and they feel that there are points of difference with it. The points of agreement do not concern the people who hold positions in the legitimate government, but rather concern the legitimate government itself. We do not believe in any National Accord which does not take into consideration the strengthening of the legitimate government and its basic role in achieving this Accord, because it will always constitute the symbol of our nation's unity in terms of territory, people, and institutions. We consider that the Lebanese tragedy has created a split between the legitimate government and its authority. The legitimate government has remained legitimate, but others have taken its place in the exercise of its authority.

Clarification Requested

[Question] We need a clarification. What do you mean by the expression "others have taken its place in the exercise of its authority"? Is it possible to separate the legitimate government from the people in it?

[Answer] I am referring to the armed militias here and there which have exploited the decrease in the authority of the government over Lebanese territory and have exercised authority in place of this legitimate government. The best proof of this is the fact that most of the vital institutions and utilities are under the authority of these non-legitimate forces. Our basic goal then is to have the legitimate government once again exercise its authority so that there will no longer be any authority exercised by non-legitimate forces and so that there will no longer be any room for non-legitimate authority.

Our points of difference with the legitimate government lie in the fact that this legitimate government is still a prisoner of the mentality which existed before the Lebanese war. This is especially true with regard to the concept of the 1943 formula which was based on duality of rule by the Maronites and the Sunni Muslims--at a time when the formula had already exploded. For this reason, it is illogical to establish a formula which does not take into consideration the participation of all sects and all groups, without exception. We will not allow any group to believe that it has no relationship to this future formula. The purpose of all of this is to eliminate sectarian discrimination among the sects during the first stage, and then to eliminate political sectarianism once and for all during a subsequent stage.

[Question] What is this future political formula which will eliminate fear and fraud and will not repeat the mistakes of the 1943 formula which was based on the existence of a majority and a minority? How can we reassure the Christians that they will not be lost in a sea of Muslims, especially after this war?

[Answer] I would like to say from the outset that I do not believe in this close relationship between the Arab world and Islam except from the cultural point of view, because in the Arab world we have not only a Moslem civilization, but also a Christian civilization, and we used to have a civilization which preceded both Islam and Christianity.

We believe in not discriminating between Christians and Muslims, and we believe in the principle of justice and equality. In order to put this principle into practice, we need to have equal representation for Muslims and Christians in the Chamber of Deputies, on the condition that all of the members of the Chamber of Deputies be elected by all Lebanese. This shortcoming did not become a major factor in Lebanon until the establishment of election laws which made it possible for Christian deputies to ignore Muslim voters and for Muslim deputies to ignore Christian voters. This is why we see everybody today discussing things on a sectarian basis as if this were something fundamental. But if Lebanon is transformed into a single election district, this would eliminate any sectarian orientation and such an orientation would be considered national treason. Concerning this matter, we believe that the Christians should keep the post of President of the Republic. We feel this way not because of any principle of majority and minority, but because we feel that the higher interest of the Arab world dictates that there should be a Christian among the Arab presidents and kings, on the condition that this president be the president of all Lebanese and not just the president of the Christians.

Divided Loyalty

[Question] Some Christians feel that the Muslims are not true Lebanese and that their feelings are more with the lands of the Arab interior, and that they feel that Lebanon is nothing more than a village in this larger Arab homeland. These Christians who say this attribute the crisis to the divided loyalty of the Muslims. What is your opinion about this?

[Answer] Of course, I reject this accusation both in form and in principle because, in practice, on the level of Lebanese national life, we do see Muslim loyalty to Lebanon. As I see it, this accusation is being made by people who, in their own minds, are mixed up concerning their concept of what a nation is. They consider that Lebanon belongs to them alone, and they demand that others be loyal to this Lebanon which is theirs. We, however, believe that Lebanon belongs to all of its citizens and that all of them should be loyal to it. I have already said that Lebanon is the basic homeland of all of its people, and that this is the desire of its people. We always stress its independence, sovereignty over all of its territory, and its unity in terms of territory, people and institutions. This is a unity which we cannot neglect, no matter what sacrifices this may entail, because partitioning of Lebanon will take place only after all of Lebanon's land, and everything on it, has been burned. Either Lebanon has to be totally united, or else it will not exist. On the basis of this premise, we cannot be true partners with the other people in our Arab world unless we preserve our nation, by means of which we will be able to contribute our share concerning their causes, which are also our vital causes. But if our nation ceases to exist, then there can be no partnership between those who have a nation and those who do not have a nation.

[Question] Half of the Lebanese army is composed of people from the Shiite sect. And this institution has been subjected to violent criticism, especially after the events of 2 April. In what manner do you work together with this institution, and what is your position with regard to the pressures which it has been subjected to? And what difference is there between your position with regard to the army and the position taken by the legitimate government?

[Answer] Our premise is that the army is an executive arm of the political authorities, and we are not in favor of any sectarianism in this army. This is shown by the fact that we have been, and still are, against the sectarian composition which has been introduced into the military council of the army, because this act has paralyzed the effectiveness of the army and has made it the object of controversy and criticism. What we want is a national army of national origin which has nothing to do with political disputes and whose mistakes are considered to be the responsibility of the political authorities. But at the present time, unfortunately, the army is being allowed to exist as an institution unto itself and independent of the legitimate government. It is being subjected to criticism, and it finds nobody who takes it under his wing and defends it. This is at a time when all the mistaken actions are attributable to the political authorities, and not to the army.

My proof of this is the crushing blow which the army suffered at 'Ayn al-Rummanah. There the political authorities managed to avoid paying for the losses and made the army bear the responsibility. But the fact is that the army has no right to make political decisions concerning these matters. Another proof of this is the discrepancy which we see in the political authorities when the prime minister issues criticism without offering any solutions which would make this army a sound tool to be used to serve their real objectives. This whole situation exists because we are afraid to call the prime minister to account and because we are afraid of having a governmental vacuum since we may not find anybody else other than the prime minister who would form a government.

We also find groups who claim to be interested in the army as well as those who abandoned it after 'Ayn al-Rummanah or who reject it, quoting general slogans which are impossible to translate into reality. All of these people are seeking to avoid the real answer and are putting the cart before the horse. This is because it is utterly impossible to separate the molding of the army from the effectiveness of a political National Accord. The concept of an Accord is what will tend to determine the nature of the army and its composition. This does not mean that it is necessary to stop using the army until we arrive at a National Accord. It means that we should use the army in places where using it will serve to strengthen confidence in it and where it will not be a party in any dispute among Lebanese. We must realize that the core of the Lebanese problem is the Lebanese issue in the South where Israel is utilizing the pretext of protecting the Christians from the danger of genocide at the hands of the Palestinians. This is the pretext under which Israel is continuing to occupy territory in southern Lebanon and is evading the implementation of the decisions of the Security Council. This is where the role of the Lebanese army comes in. It should have a fully effective presence in the South. This would lead to eliminating the pretext of the Israelis and to putting into force the decisions of the Security Council, on the one hand, and it would also lead to extending the authority of the Lebanese government to the territory in the

South and to strengthening confidence in the army. This would have a positive effect on the total situation in Lebanon, including the matter of an accord between the various Lebanese factions on the one hand as well as an accord between the Lebanese and the Palestinians. Any initiative which does not regard this matter as one of its top priorities will not get anywhere and will only lead to a temporary truce and will only put a new face on the existing crisis rather than solving it.

I would like to say again that dissolution of the army will destroy what hope we have left to put an end to this continuing tragedy. For this reason, we cannot accept any action which will lead to damaging the unity of the army because it is a fundamental institution in the structure of our nation.

[Question] Mr Walid Junblat recently refused to have a dialogue with Shaykh Bashir al-Jumayyil until he breaks off relations with Israel. Do you share Mr Junblat's position, and would you have this position apply to the entire Lebanese Front?

[Answer] We consider that the Lebanese tragedy is a calamity for all Lebanese, and we do not feel that it is useful for us to start blaming each other for what we have involved ourselves in. We do not consider that the Lebanese Front represents all Christians, and we refuse to ignore other Christian leaders. We also consider that those who belong to the Lebanese Front are part of our nation and we cannot abandon them and we cannot contribute toward increasing their involvement. We consider that we have to regain these fellow Lebanese, no matter what cost we have to pay. Furthermore, the proposal of a dialogue cannot take place except through the legitimate Lebanese government whose job it is to represent the points of view of all parties, whether it is a matter of a Lebanese-Lebanese accord, a Lebanese-Palestinian understanding, or whether it concerns relations with Syria and other nations. Although we have become accustomed to ignoring the legitimate government under our present unnatural and exceptional circumstances, we still cannot accept these exceptions as being the rule. The legitimate government is the body which represents all Lebanese both inside Lebanon and in other countries. It is on the basis of this premise and by means of the legitimate government that we must conduct a dialogue with all parties and come to understand them well. But we must bear in mind that when any party has a relationship with Israel, it not only is damaging to the interests of that party, but also is damaging to the interests of Lebanon and all of the Lebanese. For this reason, we must all assume our responsibility and eliminate this Israeli intervention in Lebanon, no matter what form it takes. This is basically an Arab responsibility, and this Arab responsibility must close the Lebanese gap, no matter how costly this action is, because this is at the core of the higher interest of the Arab nations. The Arabs will bear historic responsibility for any neglect concerning this matter.

Rejection of the Settlement of Displaced Persons

[Question] The last problem which remains is that of those people who have been displaced from their urban areas and villages. This problem equally concerns all of the parties in the Lebanese war, both as organizations and as sects. In your opinion, what is the solution?

[Answer] We must not accept any status quo which would serve to keep these displaced persons uprooted, no matter what group they belong to. On the basis of this

principle, we reject settling the displaced persons where they presently are, even though we realize that this problem cannot be totally solved except within the framework of a National Accord. But as far as the South is concerned, we must constantly strive, on a daily basis, to return these displaced persons to their cities and villages and to enable them to stay in their lands. The reason for this is that the emptying of the South of its inhabitants is something which is at variance with the formation of the Lebanese nation--one of the characteristics of which is the interrelationship of its demographic distribution with its geographical area--and this would threaten the future of our entire nation. For this reason also we reject the offering of aid to displaced persons from the South unless they return to their own lands, because aiding them when they are uprooted and displaced will only make their exodus permanent.

9468

CSO: 4304/73

MAURITANIA

OFFICIALS DISCUSS DOMESTIC CONCERNS

Paris AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic No 222, 9 Aug 81 pp 27-29

[Report on Interview with Mauritanian Officials by Bisharah Aloun in Nouakchott; date not specified: "Where Does Neutral Mauritania Stand in the Continent of Crises after 3 Years of National Liberation? There are Three Domestic Concerns; Fourth Concern Is Neutralizing Africa; France and Saudi Arabia Are To Encourage Rabat in the Position on the Sahara; Libyan Presence in the Area Is Normal"]

[Text] The third anniversary of the 10 July Movement, the national anniversary of the armed forces in Mauritania and the celebrations that accompanied these two occasions were the occasion for a visit made by AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI to Nouakchott where Bisharah Aloun met with a number of Mauritanian officials. Chief among those were the prime minister, the minister of defense and member of the National Liberation Military Committee Col Maaouiya Ould Sid 'Ahmed Taya and the minister of economy and finance Mr Dieng Boubou Farba.

A summary of the observations and discussions about the situation in Mauritania from various political, economic and social aspects [follows].

How is Mauritania, the tawny daughter of the desert, and where does she stand now 3 years after the "military uprising in a national liberation movement" and 2 years after the train in its desert center has been stopped?

With his quiet smile and his usual warmth the average Mauritanian would respond with an answer that is outwardly simple but profound in its implications. "Not bad, thank God."

It is true that this desert dweller who believes in God finds it necessary to refer to God and to mention Him in everything he does. This, however, does not signify that he is intolerant or rigid; on the contrary, he is open, expressing his thoughts and what goes on in his mind freely and candidly, calling things as he sees them and relating facts as he experiences them.

A visitor from the East or from the farthest point in the West is taken

aback by this openness. But he soon finds out the reality of the country and grasps its political, economic and social facts.

It is with such candor that one begins a discussion with Mauritania about the Sahara. There is nothing curious about this since this vital problem for them is the be-all and end-all. It is the end of "a fraternal war between fellow neighbors" and the beginning of "a period of building peace between the countries of the Arab Maghreb," the principal condition for concentrating on the development process and devoting efforts to finding solutions to the economic and social problems from which the people of the area who have been recently liberated from foreign colonialism have been suffering.

It is true that as soon as the new leadership assumed command, it committed itself to implementing the first objective that it had set, which is "to put an end to the state of war with the brothers of the Sahara." This was carried out through the 5 August 1979 agreement which was signed by Mauritania and the POLISARIO Front.

Although the war inside Mauritania has come to an end, it is still going on along its borders between "two fraternal and neighboring nations." Hence putting an end to the military confrontation has not kept Nouakchott away from dangers. It will not have full stability unless the problem of the Sahara is solved and the war in the area is finally brought to an end.

As a result of its awareness of this fact, Mauritania, through its officials, has never abandoned its duty as "an Arab and an African Muslim nation" to ensure the return of "a permanent peace" to the area.

This peace will not be "permanent" in the view of Nouakchott unless it is "fair and acceptable to all the parties" and based on "respecting the basic rights of people and their evident and sincere will to choose their destiny freely."

Hence, Mauritania think that Morocco would have to recognize the POLISARIO at least as "an acceptable negotiator" in the talks to establish a solution to the problem of the Sahara. This is because the front has established that "it does in fact exist" and that it constitutes "a serious and a real power."

But does Mauritania have a role to play in bringing about a rapprochement between remote points of view?

The response is a candid one. "We will not play any role that is not requested by this party or the other. It is true that we have committed ourselves to a neutral position on the struggle between two fraternal nations, but we will not hesitate in carrying out any positive action to bring the two nations closer together."

Mauritania do not hide the fact that "Morocco's position toward us was not encouraging. On the contrary it upset us because it considered us

linked from the outset with its enemies. Morocco even went so far as to say, even though it was confident that such statements were not true, that our land was a base used by the men of the POLISARIO to attack Morocco. None of this is true."

With some bitterness and regret Mauriticians accuse Morocco of "not stopping at words and statements, but rather of acting accordingly. Morocco attacked us more than once and went so far as to attempt to infringe upon our regime last March. Thus Morocco is not giving us a chance to talk candidly with it."

We pause at Mauritanian-Moroccan relations, and we ask what is the motive behind restoring those relations to normalcy after they had been cut in the past? What is the role of Saudi Arabia in restoring the rapprochement?

Mauriticians do not deny the fact that "the Arab mediation which was carried out by the Arab League and by a number of Arab countries, chief among which was Saudi Arabia, contributed to [the restoration of] calm and the reduction of tension." However, Nouakchott thinks that the principal factor in the resumption of relations came from "the king of Morocco's initiative in announcing his agreement to hold a referendum for determining the destiny of the people of the Sahara."

After Mauritania found that the king's decision was "a step forward that opened new horizons," it decided to prevent any solution that would constitute "a grievance" in the area. Hence, a new leaf in relations with Morocco was turned.

However, Morocco disagrees with Mauritania on determining "the nature" of the referendum. This is because Morocco does not consider the referendum a form of self-determination, but rather "an affirmation" of the choice the people of the Sahara had already made.

Mauritania here firmly and unequivocally affirms that "the Organization of African Unity recorded the king's decision and that it does not consider the king's announcement to be a mere maneuver to gain time. It rather views it as an official announcement that was made with full consideration and full knowledge of its implications. The organization finds this a referendum on self-determination for the people of the Sahara provided that a neutral African committee make the preparations for it so that it would be carried out under the supervision and control of the United Nations."

Nouakchott thinks that Morocco should in no way interfere in the organization of this referendum because "in view of the fact that Rabat controls various activities in the Sahara, the population will not be able to express their opinions and choose their destinies freely as a result of the pressures that may be placed on them."

Mauriticians express their hope that the next African summit would organize the referendum and that the recent positions of the king of Morocco following his return from Nairobi will not constitute "a step backwards."

Do the Arabs, like Saudi Arabia for example, and the west, like France, have a role to play in helping to achieve a solution to the problem of the Sahara?

A Role for France and Saudi Arabia

Mauritanians respond affirmatively. They think that France and Saudi Arabia can "play an important role in encouraging the king to go ahead with his decision: France can do so as a result of its past in the Arab Maghreb area, and Saudi Arabia, because of its importance in the Arab world."

Furthermore, Nouakchott thinks that "the change in the French administration will undoubtedly bring about positive factors in the area of solving the problem of the Sahara as well as other African problems." This is because the French socialists, according to Mauritanians, "understand more and better than others the aspirations of people who have recently emerged from colonialism to independence and freedom."

But what about Mauritanian-Libyan relations and Morocco's accusation that Libya is taking advantage of its material capabilities to strengthen its political and military existence in the area, particularly through Mauritania?

Mauritanians did not dodge the question. Instead, they considered it simple, clear and indubitable. They said, "Libya has no more presence in Mauritania today than it had during the previous age during which Mauritania had special relations with Morocco."

In addition, Nouakchott thinks "the Libyan presence in the area is normal. It is an African country of the Arab Maghreb whose significance is due to its material capabilities, political position and its support for all right-ful Arab and African causes."

The Mauritanian assurance affirmed, "In the past there were 9,000 Moroccan soldiers in Mauritania. Today, however, there is not a single Libyan soldier on our land."

If the question of the Sahara is the center of discussions, this does not mean that other subjects do not deserve pause.

It is true that the war was the principal problem due to its negative outcome and the effects it had on economic conditions in the country.

"The Sahara war" and the material and human capabilities that were required by it paralyzed construction activity in Mauritania and left their marks on the various vital facilities [in the country]. Hence, the second function that was determined by the new military command after it assumed power was "to reevaluate the national economic conditions."

The Difficult and the More Difficult

If the epoch of ending the war was "difficult," then the stage of building

the peace will be "more difficult." A visitor to Mauritania gets this impression from experiencing the daily reality [in the country] and from the dealings he has with the average Mauritanian and with the officials who are responsible for steering the ship of state in all its economic, cultural and social facilities.

Mauritania is a country of limited material means, at least at the present time. It has human capabilities that lack adequate preparation. It has a young generation that has just recently emerged from the control of foreign colonialism and from a difficult domestic experience.

The legacy is burdensome: debts, high prices, monopoly, an economic deficit, chaos, slavery and backwardness in society. Although the land has not withheld difficulties from its residents, the skies did add another problem to those difficulties. This problem may be the most important of all: it is the drought problem.

To begin with "nothing" is difficult, but how does one take action when one has "less than nothing?"

When the stage that a country is experiencing is extraordinary, such a stage necessarily requires urgent and extraordinary measures. This is what the present leadership has been trying to do for 3 years.

"Austerity" was the title of the economic policy that Mauritania pursued to meet the deficit, to pay the debts and to reduce general expenditures. The first result of this policy was a reduction in the budget deficit; it no longer exceeds 2.2 billion ouguiyas. In 1978 the deficit was about 5.2 billion ouguiyas. (Each 10 ouguiyas equal one Swiss franc).

To that end radical and urgent measures were taken to strengthen [the country's] purchasing power, to develop the agriculture and fishing sector and to pursue the utilization of reforms in a number of social life areas, the most important of which are purging the administration, reforming the courts and abolishing slavery, especially since this was considered a popular demand. In addition, the Islamic religion was to be relied on as the principal source from which justice was to get its directions.

Mauritanians are determined to "depend on themselves" in the process of construction and development. But they think that their country, which is going through a difficult period of transition needs "the cooperation and assistance of brothers and friends." Therefore, they opened the doors wide to foreign investments, and they gave foreign investors the freedom of action, provided that they adhered to "the sovereignty and the political and economic independence of the country and respected the laws that prescribe the limits of freedom of action." Recently the Arabs have come to Mauritania; at the forefront were Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Libya and others. Europe also and even China have an economic and a commercial presence in Mauritania.

If the first task of the National Liberation Movement was peaceful and

the second economic and developmental, what about the third task, which is most difficult for men who left their barracks to steer the general affairs of the country?

The third goal that was set by the armed forces command on the day after the 10 July Movement was "to ensure the establishment of actual democratic institutions" which would be charged with the responsibility of directing the policy of the country in the subsequent stage.

More than one member of the Military Committee for National Liberation, which constitutes the present leadership of the country, told us that "The military men do not wish to continue in power indefinitely. This political responsibility that they have now is an emergency, transitory one which they would not have accepted had it not been for their sense that rescuing [the country] was necessary. They want to go back to practice their basic responsibilities as soon as possible. That is, they want to go back to the barracks."

But some people admit that foreign conditions and internal climates are not presently prepared for implementation of this third task. According to them the country is still being threatened from outside. In addition, the civilian experience--a civilian was the former prime minister--was not very encouraging, especially on the eve of the recent March movement. Besides, the wheels of the development process have not yet turned as had been planned.

What is important in the view of the present leadership is to prepare individuals for direct involvement in the democratic experience by preparing them through education and learning and developing their cognitive capabilities.

But does this justify the suspension of political activities inside the country?

The leadership responds, "These activities were abolished in favor of the more urgent essential tasks which are manifested in consolidating national independence and achieving economic and social reorganization.

Mauritanian officials add, "This does not at all mean that we refuse to have citizens participate in managing the affairs of the country. Quite the contrary, we have established structures for this purpose. There is the National Voluntary Movement and there are regional councils and trade unions."

It remains to be said that betting on the future of Mauritania is difficult. It is first and foremost in the hands of the Mauritaniens themselves. The question of the Sahara and of "ending the war between brothers and spreading peace in the Arab Maghreb area" remains the principal objective in a hierarchy of priorities. It remains the basic condition for economic development and democratic practice.

Mauritania, which began by putting its reproof of "the Arab brothers" on record concludes by calling upon them and expressing the wish that they "understand the need to put an end to the state of warfare between the two fraternal nations and to go ahead with the course of openness toward peace so as to keep us from reaching a dead end."

Hence Nouakchott moves from one challenge to another. After its difficult victory over what it called the battle to ensure "neutrality," it is now making a serious effort "to neutralize" the area of north Africa, trying to stop "the fraternal struggles between neighbors and friends." The countries of that area may [then] turn to their real battle of "development and construction and set their people on the course of progress."

Will Mauritania succeed?

The first response is the same in the end as it was in the beginning. The Mauritanian says, "[We hope for] good things, God willing."

8592
CSU: 4504/61

OPPOSITION LEADER CALLS FOR REVISED CONSTITUTION

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 11 Jul 81 p 11

[Interview with Mohamed Majdoubi, deputy of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces in the Moroccan parliament and member of the World Peace Council, by Ghassan Makhul, date and place not specified]

[Excerpts] Following is an interview conducted by AL-SAFIR with Mohamed Majdoubi, deputy of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces in the Moroccan parliament and member of the World Peace Council. It sheds some light on what actually happened and assists in understanding the situation in Morocco and its likely ramifications:

[Question] In your opinion what are the causes behind the violent events that have occurred recently in Morocco?

[Answer] Perhaps we can divide the causes of the events that occurred on 20 and 21 June into two: circumstantial causes and indirect causes. The former include the increase in the prices of the basic commodities consumed by the poor masses in Morocco by approximately 40 to 80 percent. The indirect reasons consist of the harsh circumstances in which the Moroccan public lives as a result of the policy pursued by the Moroccan government in political, economic, social matters, and especially in cultural affairs. This policy is characterized by its insensitivity to the needs of the poor masses, and by its support of the bourgeoisie who is usurping the entire resources of Morocco, including the resources that used to be owned by the French colonialists, like fertile farm lands, factories, industrial, commercial, and financial organizations and the like.

Although the Moroccan masses have rejected this policy whenever they have had the opportunity to express their opinion, nevertheless the rulers continued in their policy disregarding the desires and aspirations of the Moroccan people and its poor masses. The Moroccan Socialist Union of Popular Forces expressed these demands fully and courageously. Through its long history which has exceeded 20 years of difficult opposition, the party has offered enormous sacrifices, including a large number of martyrs from amongst its fighters and its leadership, of whom we may mention Mehdi Ben Barka, Omar Benjelloul, and Mohamed Karina.

Currently Morocco is living in a period of trial democracy which has brought about the causes of the present explosion as well as the previous explosions, and has led to the crises which can be summarized as follows:

- 1) A political crisis caused by mock public elections and the establishment of fictitious democratic institutions that do not reflect the public will, and are unable to make the decisions required to serve this public, and meet its basic needs and aspirations to rid itself of imperialism and foreign dependency in the economic and cultural arenas.
- 2) An economic crisis due to the weak purchasing power of the working masses which is a result of the freeze in wages and the continual rise in prices, in addition to the increasing class disparities between the rich and the poor, for while the poor people cannot get their daily food, a small class lives the life of luxury, splendor, and dissipation.
- 3) A cultural crisis which has intensified in recent times and whose roots can be traced back to the 60's. This crisis led to the explosion of events in Casablanca in 1965 and is reflected in a class elite educational system that put barriers in front of the children of the popular classes that desire their continued education. Furthermore, it is reflected in the inexistence of job opportunities for college graduates, and the perpetuation of the dependency on foreign cultures and the preservation of educational institutions that are linked to foreign missions for the advantage of the bourgeois class and the sons of the ruling class.

[Question] What are the solutions which the Socialist Union of Popular Forces have proposed to deal with the current events?

[Answer] The removal of the present government and the formation of a new government is one opinion that has been voiced. We in the Socialist Union have presented a comprehensive phased program to solve the problems that trouble our country. This solution is based primarily on a revision of the current constitution which has paralyzed the organs of parliament and rendered them ineffective. We requested in a report of the conference that was held in December 1978, a revision of the constitution to grant the people the opportunity to elect a legislative assembly that enjoys complete mandatory powers to enable it to define the policy that the masses of the Moroccan people aspire to. Therefore, we do not see a correlation between the problem and a change of individuals, but with a change of the present policy in Morocco which does not serve the overwhelming majority of the masses of workers, farmers, young people and unemployed.

The present constitution divides the legislative power between the king and the House of Representatives, and gives the executive power to the government. It is our point of view that for a true democracy to exist in our country there must be a constitutional monarchy, that is, a democratic monarchy in which the government and the House of Representatives would play a role for which they are responsible vis-a-vis the masses of the Moroccan people, i.e., the government would wield wide powers and be responsible to the elected parliament. We say this because our country has passed through some harsh experiences namely the faked elections which bring deputies to the legislative organizations whom the

authorities have chosen without consultation with the masses and in disregard of their will. We believe that these experiences are some of the causes that have resulted in the present policy--this policy which on the one part has led to the complete exasperation of the masses which in turn has resulted in the explosion. This was reflected in the recent strike which the Democratic Labor Confederation called for and which the Socialist Union of Popular Forces supported to solve the present crisis that has become a dangerous crisis that makes the Moroccan people endure unbearable suffering.

The solution to the crisis lies in the establishment of true democracy and the participation of the public in its determination, conduct and execution on all levels. These are the levels which alone the executive apparatus assume within the framework of unsound organs which have been controlled by this forged majority who owe their whole allegiance to the government and their only role is to serve the government's honor and support it even in decisions that are contrary to the interests of the masses. As an example of this: the majority stood against the latest strike movement which the Moroccan working class called for, which rightfully demanded a revocation of the excessive price increases which result in their further impoverishment and a weakening of their purchasing power.

[Question] Do you believe that current happenings in Morocco are harbingers of more violent events or more general movements?

[Answer] The events of today are the beginning of a chain, unless the government repudiates its unpopular policy. We hope that the government will learn something from the results and studies of these events in order to spare the country further disturbances which will lead to further repression and the appearance of fascistic tendencies.

[Question] You don't believe that the solution in Morocco is the fall of the royal regime?

[Answer] We have grasped the experiences of the Third World and the Arab world and we have come to believe now that the problems are not problems of regime but rather they are problems of the type of government; whether it is a rule in which the masses share and which serves their interests and which equips them to realize their aims and builds experiences which they can believe in, or whether it is rule that will serve these masses in order to serve the group holding power in the country.

From here we have set down among our ideological choices the true mottoes of democracy (democracy, liberty, and socialism). We feel that it is possible that the present monarchy will evolve and become a constitutional monarchy in which the king would be a symbol of unity and rule, while the people would be represented by means of their real representatives within the framework of democracy, in addition to a government responsible to the representatives of this people.

FIGURES ON MOROCCAN RESIDENTS OF FRANCE, FRENCH RESIDENTS OF MOROCCO

Casablanca AL BAYANE in French 11 Aug 81 p 3

[Text] Following are statistics on Moroccan residents of France and French residents of Morocco:

1) Number of Moroccan residents in France:

1976	347,984
1977	376,055
1978	383,376
1979	399,952

The above figures are from the French Ministry of the Interior, based on the number of resident cards in effect as of 31 December 1979. These statistics place the Moroccan community in fifth place among the foreign communities in France (after the Portuguese, Algerians, Italians and Spanish).

2) Moroccan immigration into France:

In principle Moroccan immigration into France is regulated by the manpower accord signed by France and Morocco on 1 June 1963. However, this accord has lost some of its effectiveness since the suspension of permanent immigration in July 1974.

However, Moroccans remain the principal source of seasonal labor, and France is still the major partner of Morocco in terms of emigration. The whole Moroccan community living abroad amounts to 600,000 people, two-thirds of whom are in France.

3) Categories of Moroccan residents of France:

- The privileged group: 116,650 people, or 39 percent of the total.
- The ordinary group: 142,561 people, or 48 percent of the total.
- The temporary group: 38,054 people, or 13 percent of the total.

(Nearly 20,000 Moroccan students were registered in various French universities during the 1980-1981 school year.)

4) Composition of the Moroccan population of France:

--By sex: 73.3 percent males and 26.7 percent females.

--By age: under 17, 26.1 percent; 17 to 24, 15.6 percent; 25 to 44, 48 percent; over 44, 9.5 percent.

--By region: the Paris region is clearly ahead with 31.1 percent of the total; the Rhone-Alpes region follows with 8.4 percent; the Provence-Cote d'Azur region, with 8 percent; and the northern region, 7.6 percent.

--By professional activity: some 29.9 percent are employed in the construction industry; 37.5 percent in the processing industry; 6 percent in trade; and 5.8 percent in the service industry.

Evolution of the French Community in Morocco

1) From 1956 to 1980: Totaling 350,000 people in 1955, the French community in Morocco today amounts to no more than 48,000 people. Nonetheless it remains the largest concentration of French citizens abroad and the largest foreign community in Morocco. There were only 165,000 French in Morocco in 1961 and 110,000 in 1965. Since 1 January 1975 the figure of French residents of Morocco has varied, from 54,948 at the end of 1975; to 52,690 at the end of 1976; to 51,730 at the end of 1977; to 48,607 at the end of 1978; to 48,000 at the end of 1979.

2) Socio-professional composition of the French community in Morocco: about 18,000 French citizens are engaged in the professions in Morocco; 8,000 in the public sector; and 10,000 in the private sector.

--Public sector: about 500 French serve in Moroccan embassies and consulates. About 1,000 teachers are assigned to lycees and schools coming directly under the French Cultural Mission. About 5,000 teachers are assigned under the French aid program in lycees and schools under the Moroccan Ministry of National Education. Nearly 750 French experts are assigned to Moroccan administrative entities other than cultural establishments. About 500 French citizens have been recruited directly by Moroccan government services outside the Franco-Moroccan agreement on cultural and technical cooperation.

--Private sector: about 4,500 French citizens work in the business sector. About 4,200 French citizens work in the industrial sector. Several hundred French citizens work in the agricultural and handicraft sectors. Some 1,500 French citizens still work in the liberal professions.

3) Geographic location of the French community in Morocco: the percentage of French citizens registered in each main area of Morocco is as follows: Casablanca, 55 percent; Rabat, 19 percent; Fez, 8 percent; Marrakech, 8 percent; Agadir, 5 percent; Tangiers, 3 percent; Oujda, 2 percent. Of the 10,000 French citizens working in the private sector, almost 7,500 live in Casablanca and 1,300 live in Rabat, accounting for nearly 90 percent of the total. In the areas of Marrakech, Oujda, Fez, and Tangiers, the French residents generally work in the public sector.

5170

CSO: 4519/43

BP, MOBIL TO ASSUME OIL OPERATIONS

Doha GULF TIMES in English 25 Aug 81 p 1

[Text]

Doha: In a major reshuffle of its oil drilling and production operations Qatar is expected to shortly announce the nomination of two of the world's most influential oil giants as contractors for its onshore and offshore operations.

British Petroleum is being tipped for onshore production operations and Mobil, America's second biggest oil major, for offshore operations. However, Shell continues to be a major contender for offshore.

BP will move in on its own from September 16 when the Qatar General Petroleum Corporation's service agreement with the Dukhan Service Company expires.

The DSC is a consortium of BP, Royal Dutch/Shell Group, Compagnie Francaise des Petroles (CFP-Total), all holding 23.75pc shares; Mobil and Exxon, jointly 23.75pc, and Partex, 6pc.

BP provided most staff at the Dukhan operations. Thus in the case of onshore operations it will not mean much change as most staff may remain the

same.

But in offshore operations it might prove a wholesale changeover from the present service operator, Shell Service Company, to Mobil.

The Shell Service Company, successor to the Shell Company of Qatar Ltd (SCQ), will continue in its present term as contractor for offshore operations until April 1 next.

The two companies — DSC and Shell Service Company — were retained for five years in 1976 when the oil business was nationalised in Qatar.

The government bought 100pc shares of the erstwhile Qatar Petroleum Company Ltd, then the operators for the onshore operations, in 1976 and took full control of offshore operations from the Shell Company of Qatar Ltd at the beginning of 1977.

Their fee was fixed at 1.266pc of the official selling price of a barrel of crude plus a lifting allowance of 130,000 barrels a day at official price, without premium.

Qatar's present oil production totals 400,000 barrels a day — 200,000 from onshore and 200,000 from offshore.

DRAFT 5-YEAR AGRICULTURAL PLAN READY

Dubai KHALEEJ TIMES in English 4 Aug 81 p 3

[Text]

THE Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has drawn up the draft five-year plan for the agricultural sector, beginning this year.

The plan stresses the importance of agriculture in the national economy. It ranks second in terms of contribution to the total national product, its contribution being 2.2 per cent. Workers in this sector now account for five per cent of the labourers in the country, compared to 7.5 per cent in 1975.

Nationals form the larger part of total labour force in this sector—they number 40 to 50 per cent in cultivation, 70 to 75 per cent in fisheries and 80 to 85 per cent in animal husbandry.

The agricultural sector provides a large number of nationals, especially the Bedouins, an opportunity to take part in building a modern economy. Therefore, the development of this sector is considered both a social and an economic goal of the state.

The sector also gains importance because it provides approximately 26 per cent of the total food needs of the country, the rest being imported.

MORE FUNDS

A number of factors contributed to the development of agriculture since 1975, one of which was the care taken by the state which is reflected in the increased government expenditure on the agriculture. A sum of Dh 928 million has been set apart as fixed capital for farm development—in which the federal government contributed Dh 180 million and the local governments the rest.

The state's concern was also reflected in the provision of loans and distribution of agricultural lands, handed

over to nationals without any obligations, digging of wells, installation of water pumps, and provision of other requirements of production such as seeds, fertilisers, chemicals on 50 per cent subsidy.

There are plans to expand the area of support provided by the government to increase assistance for the establishment of a drip irrigation network.

The state is also building fishing harbours and establishing free servicing workshops and providing marine machines, boats and fishing equipment at half the price. In addition, nationals are given financial assistance for their animals, in order to guarantee production requirements such as animal fodder. The assistance in this field amounted to Dh 13 million in 1980. Veterinary services and medicine are given free.

PROBLEMS

The assistance received by the agricultural sector for the year 1980 amounted to Dh 106 million, in addition to Dh 25 million which was provided in the form of irrigation pumps, fences, spray machines, marine equipment etc.

The plan draft also lists the problems facing the agricultural sector, which, if they continue, will affect the development plans in the coming period.

These relate to the limited area of land suitable for cultivation, high salt content of the soil and lack of organic materials in it, insufficiency of rain water for irrigation, and the unorganised expansion of cultivated area in the last few years.

These factors reduced the percentage of land suitable for agricultural

production. The sector also suffers from inadequate infrastructure, and lack of local expertise and a technical cadre necessary to face the requirements of speedy development. Another problem is the large number of small holdings.

In the fisheries sector, the government is encouraging the use of modern boats.

Regarding animal husbandry traditional methods and poor feed reduce production. Other problems are lack of marketing bodies, lending institutions, lack of specialised local cadres, and limited funds.

The plan aims at using the most up-to-date scientific methods, increased use of machinery in agricultural operations, protection of national resources and raising the living standards of farmers.

TARGETS

The plan expects that the cultivated area under fruits, vegetables and other crops would reach 200,000 dunums by 1985. This area in 1980 was 182,000 dunums.

Thus the expected increase by 1985 is: 26 per cent for vegetables, 68 per cent for dates, 53 per cent for fruits, 33 per cent for wheat and 29 per cent for fodder.

The production of local red meat is to increase from 3,783 tons to 5,643 tons by 1985, poultry meat from 1,910 tons to 8,654 tons and dairy products from 11,870 tons to 22,332 tons, an increase of 88 per cent.

Eggs production will rise from 54 million in 1980 to 275 million. Fish production now is about 15,000 tons and is expected to increase to 24,000 tons.

The annual consumption of water reached 565 million cubic metres, while the available quantities of water is about 210 million cubic metres, resulting in a deficit of 355 million cubic metres of water.

The plan calls for support to agricultural marketing operations and establishment of agricultural bank to encourage farmers and fishermen to expand their production. Establishment of agricultural cooperatives is also suggested.

AUSTRALIA, DUBAI DISCUSS WHEAT SHIPPING DISCREPANCIES

Abu Dhabi EMIRATES NEWS in English 31 Aug 81 pp 1, 3

[Article by Maruf Khwaja]

[Text]

Dubai: Gulf importers of Australian wheat have long been baffled by a mystery attending its procurement. How is it that wheat of a specific and certified weight is loaded onto a ship in Australia and shrinks by several tons by the time it is offloaded in Dubai?

Some of the importers yesterday asked this question of members of Australia's Wheat Board now visiting the region to see what more could be done for their traditional customers in the Gulf who take fifteen per cent of Australian wheat exports every year. And they found, at a meeting organised by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, that the Wheat Board was equally baffled.

In fact, said Ian Stewart, Export Manager of the Board leading a three-member delegation on a Gulf tour, he was intrigued at the mystery. The Board, he told Saif Ahmed Al Ghurair, President of the Chamber and other members, had conducted an extensive inquiry into the matter over a period of two years and could come up with no answer.

Weighing methods and equipment at ports of loading in Australia had been thoroughly examined, he said, and found to be without fault. The possibility of pilferage on the way was also dismissed because grain carriers were virtually theft-proof and shipment was direct. The Board had also considered the moisture content factor whereby wheat exposed to heat could lose weight en route. But this was also ruled out because Australia was a dry

country and if anything the excessive humidity in the Gulf ought to add to rather than subtract from the weight of the cargo.

One possible answer which did not however figure at the very cordial discussions could be short weightment at ports of origin. Instances are said to be on record where grain exports from producer countries to the third world have been subject to allegations of short weighing by exporters. Such allegations had surfaced in a major American wheat scandal about three years ago.

In the matter of Australian wheat supplies to the Gulf, it was disclosed at the meeting that several shiploads had recently been short of recorded measurements upon receipt by the importer. And weighing machines here have been found in order. The mystery shortage ranged from .47 per cent to four per cent in one instance. Vessels, serving the Australia-Gulf wheat trade usually carry about 30,000 tons of grain each. Been over a period of some years this adds up to a fairly substantial quantity of short-measuring, and a corresponding loss to importers most of whom appear to have placed all their eggs in the Australian basket.

The matter of weightment aside, the meeting was useful and productive to both sides. Asked for suggestions about improving conditions and economies of purchase, transport, storage and milling of Australian wheat, Stewart said one answer could lie in Gulf importers increasing their

grain storage capacity. The Australian wheat board was considering a proposal to collaborate in setting up trans-shipment facilities possibly in the UAE. An official could visit the region in the near future to survey possibilities. But the proposal was still at an early stage and the delegation could give no assurance about Australian assistance in expanding storage facilities in this region.

Another suggestion was for Gulf importers to make their purchases in greater bulk. For example, said Stewart, instead of 30,000 tons single consignments could be boosted to 40,000 by use of larger vessels. Care could also be taken to place orders at times when prices were most favourable. But, he said, a request that greater credit facilities be granted and payment period of one year be given to Gulf buyers, could not be met because the Australian wheat grower would not be able to afford it. There was also an interaction of commodity

price, currency value and interest rate factors and these combined to make the grant of further facilities difficult.

The Dubai side at the meeting which included an importer from Qatar, also expressed concern over the effect of labour disputes in Australia on wheat supplies to this region. Stewart said although the government there was doing its best to prevent strikes, nothing could be done about inter-union disputes which sometimes affected loading.

The Australian delegation offered to put an expert in wheat milling at the disposal of factories in Dubai to help them achieve greater productivity and iron out any technical problems attending flour milling. Stewart said the delegation will be visiting Abu Dhabi, Qatar and North and South Yemen, in the course of the present tour. A possibility of setting up a roller mill in North Yemen was being examined.

CSO: 4300/108

BRIEFS

ILLEGAL ALIENS DEPORTEI --Abu Dhabi (Al Ittihad): A total of 441 workers have been deported following an inspection drive launched by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in various UAE towns. A source at the Ministry said most of the deported workers were Indian and Pakistani nationals who were ordered out of the country for abandoning their original sponsors and working for new employers. A total of 41 labour inspectors examined the labour situation of 1,299 business establishments during the months of April, May and June. A total of 154 companies were found violating labour laws and 344 others which had committed minor offences have been notified to eliminate these irregularities. A total of 225 inspectors covered work sites throughout the country. Out of 616 workers who had been arrested during the campaign 441 were deported. The others were released for producing the necessary immigration and labour documents. [Text] [Abu Dhabi EMIRATES NEWS in English 30 Aug 81 p 3]

CSO: 4300/108

POLISARIO MEMBER DISCUSSES PROPOSED PLEBISCITE, SAHARA SITUATION

Beirut AL-HURRIYAH in Arabic No 1023, 13 Jul 81, pp 29-30

[Interview with Nur al-Din, member of POLISARIO's Political Bureau, by Zuhayr al-Jaza'iri and Simon Khuri; date and place not given]

[Text] Recently major changes have taken place concerning the Western Sahara issue on the international, Africa, and pan-Arab levels. They include Mitterrand's becoming president of France, the Nairobi summit meeting which treated the Saharan issue as a fundamental topic, King Hassan II's acceptance of the holding of a plebiscite among the Saharan people, through a neutral committee, while faced with the groundswell of the mass movement which has returned to the streets of Morocco's cities, and Saudi Arabia's sponsorship of the settlement between Mauritania and Morocco. These changes took place after Saudi Arabia's statements that the "Saharan problem" would soon end with a settlement between the parties involved, and statements made by King Hassan II to the effect that the Sahara case will be closed after the completion of setting up the Moroccan military wall around the "vital triangle" in Western Sahara. In order to clarify some of the aspects of the political map of Western Sahara, and in order to learn POLISARIO's opinion concerning them, AL-HURRIYAH held an interview with Mr Nur al-Din, member of the Political Bureau of POLISARIO.

Acceptance of the Plebiscite Is a Retreat by Morocco

[Question] Let us begin with King Hassan II's agreement to hold a plebiscite in Western Sahara. How do you evaluate the fact that he has agreed to this?

[Answer] Before talking about the importance of this decision, let us first of all talk about the motives behind it. Hassan II's decision was taken as a result of the fact that he felt internationally isolated since his country was a power of occupation and since he had rejected international resolutions. The decision was also the result of the huge losses which his army had suffered in the Saharan war, and the effect that these losses had on Morocco's internal situation. One cannot isolate the recent series of strikes from the economic and social damage which has been inflicted upon Morocco by the Saharan war.

In spite of the fact that Hassan II wanted to present his recent decision as an unexpected surprise, it still remains a fact that the holding of this plebiscite has

long been demanded by the UN and was even directly brought up when Spain was withdrawing from the Sahara region. Spain, while it was about to withdraw from the area, procrastinated in the implementation of this resolution.

The OAU, in most of its recent conferences, has adopted a resolution concerning the holding of this plebiscite. For this reason, we consider Hassan II's decision to accept the holding of this plebiscite, in whatever form, to be an admission of the occupation and a reverse of his previous decisions. When the OAU brought up the matter of a plebiscite, Hassan II at that time condemned the intervention of the OAU in "Morocco's internal affairs," and at that time he considered that the Saharan people had already decided its fate since the time that the "tribal chiefs" had marched with him in the Green March and since the Moroccan flag had been hoisted in Dakhla. By accepting the plebiscite process, the king is admitting that imperialism is being liquidated in the area.

But we, the Saharan people, have had long experience with the maneuvers of this king. However, in spite of the fact that the king, by means of this decision, wants to outflank the OAU, the decision is nevertheless a political gain for us.

Withdrawal of the Moroccan Army Is a Condition for Impartiality of the Plebiscite

[Question] After this decision was made, Morocco's prime minister, Maati Bouabid, stated that he was fully confident that the results of the plebiscite would be favorable to Morocco. What basis does he have for making this statement?

[Answer] This statement was made for internal consumption and to lull the Moroccan people to sleep.

[Question] What are the conditions which you propose in order to guarantee the impartiality of the plebiscite?

[Answer] We accept the plebiscite on the condition that it remain a Saharan plebiscite, that is, that it include the Saharan people and no one else.

Also, the Saharan people do not agree to holding the plebiscite while under Moroccan occupation and while the invading Moroccan army and police are in Western Sahara. For this reason, we consider the withdrawal of the Moroccan army to be a condition which would guarantee the impartiality of the plebiscite, and would guarantee that the plebiscite will include all the people of the Sahara—including the freedom-fighters and the refugees.

[Question] We notice that the OAU's resolution did not refer to POLISARIO as the representative of the Saharan people.

[Answer] The OAU did not determine who the negotiating parties are to be and left this matter up to the Saharan people and the neutral committee. We in POLISARIO are confident concerning our people's opinion, and when we say that we support the plebiscite, we are differentiating between the plebiscite which the OAU passed a resolution concerning, and the plebiscite which the king wants.

[Question] What is the nature of the resolution passed by the OAU?

[Answer] The OAU's plebiscite would be carried out by a neutral power and would be supervised by the UN and the OAU. The committee would get in touch with the parties involved in the issue in order to arrange a cease-fire, in order to take measures which would guarantee the soundness of the plebiscite, and to have recourse to the minutes of the previous meeting which advocated the withdrawal of the Moroccan army in order to pave the way for the neutral committee to hold the plebiscite.

[Question] Another question occurs to me, which is: How is it possible to prove the identity of the Saharans?

[Answer] In this regard, we have no doubt that the Moroccan occupiers will utilize all available means to misrepresent the will of our people. But the neutral committee has numerous documents which can prove the identity of the Saharans. They include the POLISARIO Front's documents, old documents which were used by the Spanish occupying power, and the documents which are held by the Saharans who have been distributed throughout various refugee areas.

[Question] Other than with regard to its position concerning your cause, how do you assess the recent African summit meeting?

[Answer] We in POLISARIO are very anxious to preserve the unity and coherence of the OAU. For this reason, we consider the fact that the OAU emerged from its last meeting as a coherent and united organization to be a vital factor in its success. The American administration has attempted to put pressure on the OAU to expel Libya or to take a [negative] position toward it. Also, Egypt and Sudan have tried to prevent Quadhdhafi from being the OAU's chairman next year. But these efforts were not successful in influencing the African consensus and were not able to split the organization. In its recent meeting, the OAU passed a number of positive resolutions, such as the resolutions concerning the Palestine problem, national liberation causes, and resolutions concerning improving the atmosphere [of relations] in Africa. There was apprehension that the OAU would split apart, but the OAU overcame this apprehension. The OAU emerged with a number of resolutions which were in opposition to American policy, such as the OAU's position with regard to the Palestine problem and position concerning the racist regimes.

The Military Situation

[Question] King Hassan II proudly speaks of his military victories in Western Sahara, and he bases this on his achievement of the military blockade set up around the vital triangle. Has this military wall greatly changed the course of the Saharan war?

[Answer] As far as we are concerned, this security wall is not a magic barrier which prevents us from reaching the occupied areas. Quite the contrary, we consider it to be proof of the fact that the Moroccan forces are unable to control the Sahara. Work on, and drumming up support for, this blockade began after we succeeded in liberating numerous towns such as al-Mahbes, Echdeira, Bir al-Halou, and Amgala, and after the other major towns, such as El Aaium, Bu Craa, and Smara came within range of our guns. Here Hassan II wanted to do what the French did

before their defeat in Algeria. That is, he wanted to set up a line, similar to the Morice line, around the main cities. But we penetrated this line from two directions. We penetrated it at Ra's al-(Khanafre), where we captured weapons and took prisoners, and we also penetrated it at Smara and Bu Craa. We also cleared thousands of mines and drove the Moroccan forces back 30 kilometers. At first Hassan II wanted to put electrical [barbed] wire and points, as well as mine fields, in the blockade. But then he realized how much all of this would cost and realized that the blockade was unable to put a stop to our operations in the Sahara and in southern Morocco, and the result is that the blockade today consists only of an earthen wall and the rest has been dispensed with. Our recent operations have concentrated on hitting Moroccan army groups inside Morocco and behind these barriers and on penetrating their defenses. Besides our penetration operations, we have put up bases along this blockade in order to guarantee constant bombardment of the invading Moroccan forces. In spite of the fact that the king has obtained new weapons such as the F-15 and Mirage planes, our forces [are a match for them because they] have become more experienced and more powerful.

The Role of the Americans and the Saudis

[Question] Are you not alarmed about the Mauritanian-Moroccan settlement which was sponsored by Saudi Arabia?

[Answer] We consider this to be a normal settlement because Mauritania and Morocco did not break off relations due to the Sahara issue. They did so because of the attempted coup which Hassan II undertook against Mauritania. Saudi efforts in this regard are also not something new. For some time the Saudis have been trying to bring the king out of his isolation and out of the dilemma caused by this war.

[Question] There is talk about an "American initiative" in the Sahara. Are you aware of anything of this sort?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the Americans will attempt, by political means, to obtain what they failed to obtain by force. First there was the deployment of the king's forces, which were supported by America, but then these forces had to retreat without succeeding in liquidating our forces. American policy now is oriented in the direction of granting a wider role to the Moroccan regime. For this reason, the Americans eliminated all of the conditions which they had imposed upon Morocco for supplying it with arms, and then arms began to pour into Morocco. The Americans want Morocco to take the place of France, which is no longer ruled by Giscard d'Estaing. But the assessment of the Americans is that the Saharan war is a swamp which Hassan II's regime may drown in. For this reason, they are trying to get him out of this dilemma with as few losses as possible and with a solution which would allow him to save face.

We Support the Moroccan Opposition

[Question] Your organization has invited the Moroccan opposition to have a dialogue with it concerning finding a solution to the Saharan problem. Did you renew this invitation after clashes between the opposition and the regime became more intense?

[Answer] Although we have noticed no change in the position taken by the Moroccan opposition with regard to our cause, this invitation to hold a constructive dialogue is still good. And recently our appeal demonstrated its effectiveness after the veil of democracy was ripped away from the face of the [Moroccan] regime. The bloodbaths in Rabat, Fes, and Casablanca demonstrated the failure of the unsteady relationship which exists between the king and the opposition. And any continuation of this relationship helps the king's credibility when dealing with the people. If they want to enhance the effectiveness of the popular struggle against the regime, then we are ready to help them so that they can put a stop to these maneuvers by the king and so that they can pull the rug out from under the forces of reaction.

Mitterrand's Success and His Partnership with the Communists Are Two Positive Factors for Us

[Question] How did you greet Mitterrand's victory in the French elections?

[Answer] We welcomed it, because Mitterrand inclines toward the policy of liquidating imperialism in Africa. Perhaps the policy of France will not change greatly, but it will not contain the same imperialistic fervor and interventionism which it used to. This is important.

Furthermore, POLISARIO has long had relations with Mitterrand and his party. We have visited him many times, have held discussions and meetings with him, and joint communiques have been issued which favor our cause. For this reason, we consider his rise to power to be a positive change for us and for many of those who are combatting imperialism in Africa. Hassan II was against Mitterrand.

One important factor in Mitterrand's policy is the fact that the French communists are sharing power with him, and this is a positive guarantee in favor of the former French colonies and in favor of Africa's national liberation movement.

No Cease-Fire Now

[Question] After the king agreed to holding the plebiscite, did your side institute a cease-fire, or will this take place in the near future?

[Answer] So far we, for our part, have not instituted a cease-fire, and we will keep our rifles loaded until the committee from the OAU establishes reasonable conditions for a cease-fire. And if we do institute a cease-fire in order to facilitate the job of this committee, we will still keep our rifles ready and will resume fighting in case there is any hesitation or fraud concerning the implementation of the OAU's resolutions. Experience has taught us the importance of keeping our weapons ready and of being alert to the king's maneuvers at the same time.

9468

CSO: 4504/43

END

END OF

FICHE

DATE FILMED

25 Sept. 1981